Smithsonian

December 1985

A *charro* queen grooms horse's mane during Fiesta in San Antonio (p. 114)

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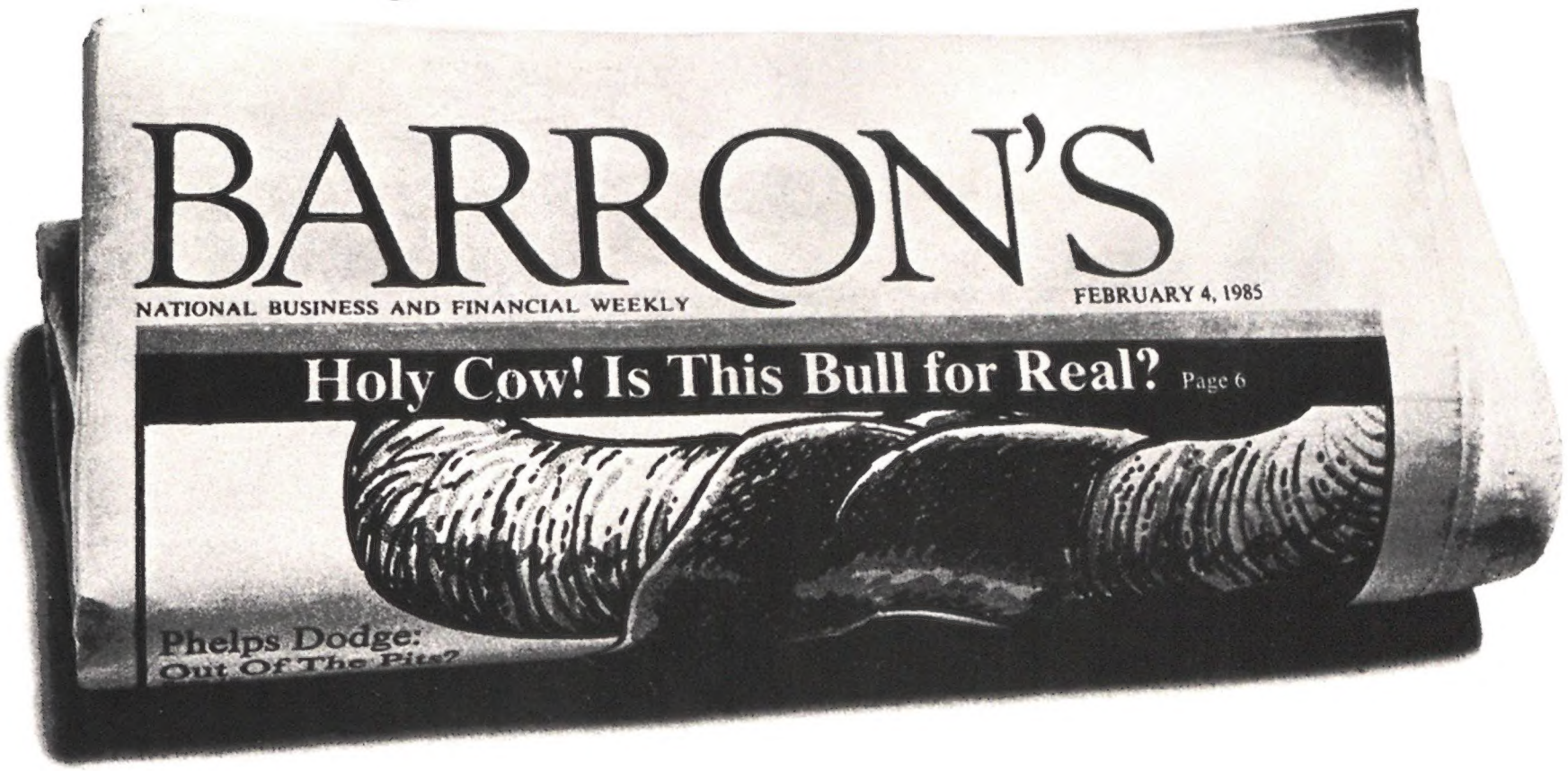
BARRON'S
NATIONAL BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL WEEKLY
FEBRUARY 4, 1985
Holy Cow! Is This Bull for Real? Page 6
Phelps Dodge:
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December 1985

Smithsonian

Volume 16, Number 9

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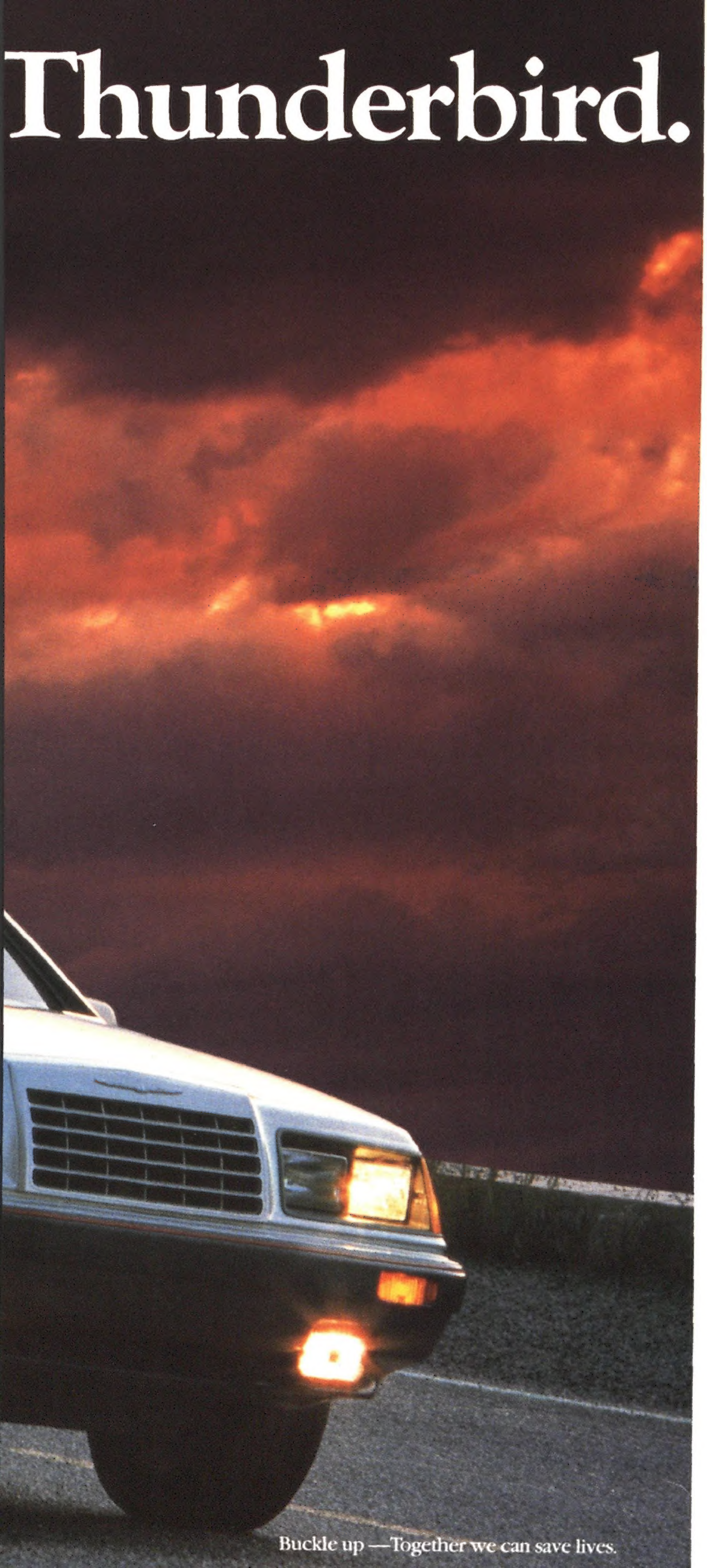

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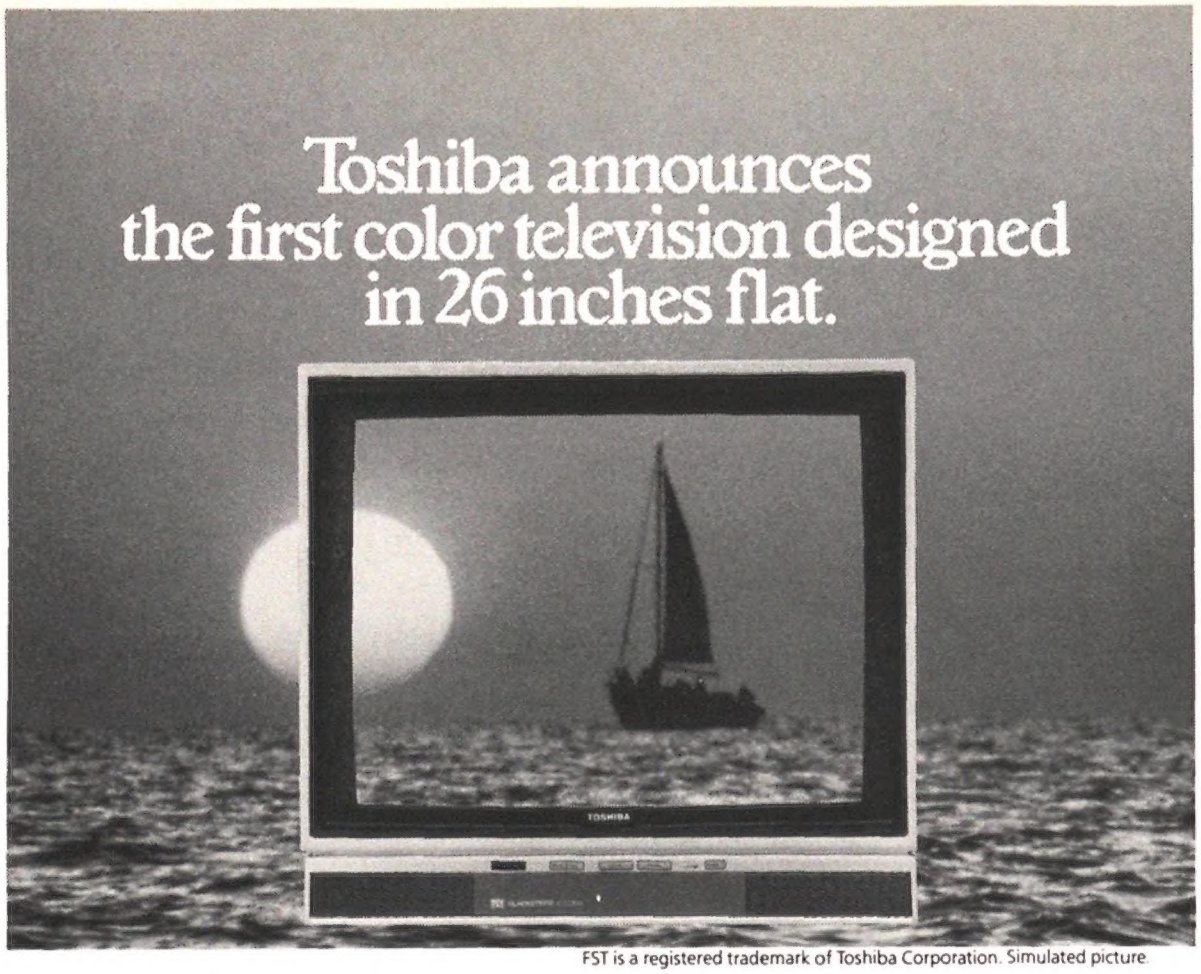

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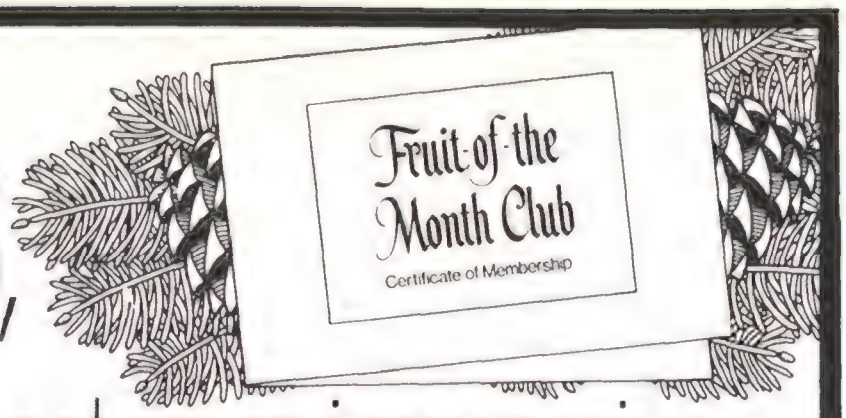

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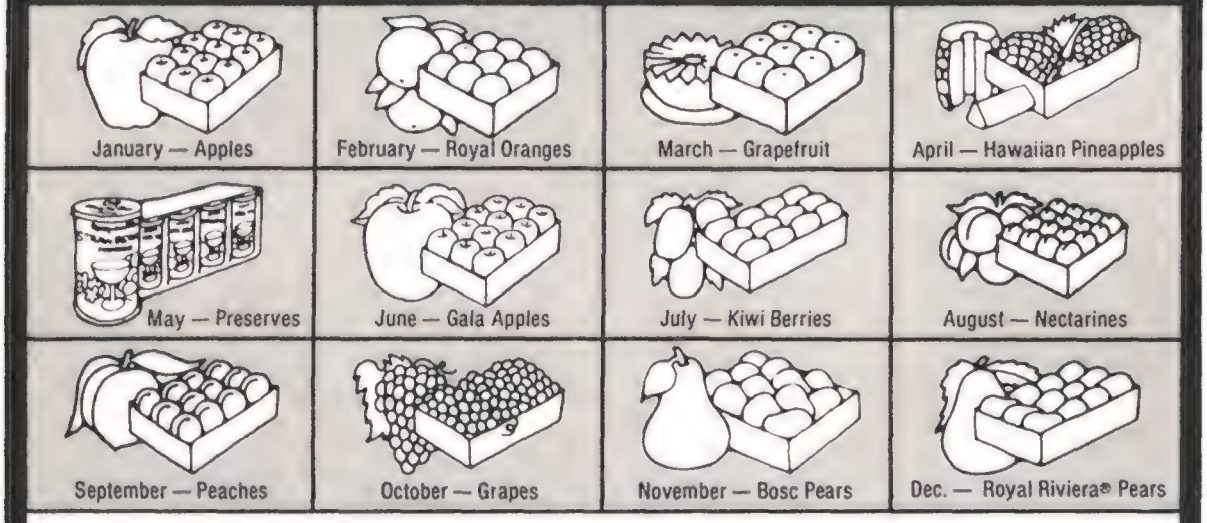

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Smithsonian horizons

The integration of art with design, after a hiatus, is again the norm because of pioneer work in packaging and advertising

The world of contemporary design is arguably closer than that of the fine arts to the world in which, until about 200 years ago, most works of art were created. Such, at least, is the inference that can be drawn from a recent discussion of esthetics by M.H. Abrams in the *Bulletin* of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. From the classical Greeks onward, each art was viewed as a skill or craft, shaping its appropriate materials for a specified purpose, setting or ceremony.

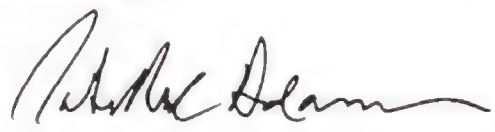
Only in the latter part of the 18th century, Abrams believes, was this "construction model" replaced by a "contemplation model" of art-as-such. Under Immanuel Kant's immense influence, its products began to be set off entirely from the world of practical concerns, and given value and rapt attention without reference to their setting and the manner in which they were made. Such works, as Kant says, please for their own sake.

Still, we should remember that the separation between art-as-such and art for a purpose, or design, is neither complete nor irreversible. Architecture is perhaps the field that most nearly and consistently offers to bridge the two. But in addition there are from time to time individuals whose lives and creative work cover the whole span.

Herbert Bayer, who died in September at the age of 85, was such an individual. Drawn to the Bauhaus in 1921 by the writings of Kandinsky, he embodied and carried through its ambition to "create the new building of the future which will embrace architecture and sculpture and painting in a single unity." His own work in its totality is "a statement about the integration of the contemporary artist into an industrial society." Fountains, furniture, factories reflect his touch, as does the entire setting of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in Colorado.

Bayer came to this country as a refugee in 1938 and presently became associated with Walter Paepcke and his Container Corporation of America. Paepcke had come to his own integrated vision of design. Over the years, having indelibly identified his company with good design, he saw it prosper accordingly. Out of his association with Bayer came many things—not least notably the unprecedented commissioning of important artworks that vastly extended the horizons of advertising and the general taste for modernism in art. Particularly memorable was the "Great Ideas of Western Man" series, linking seminal philosophical expressions with original interpretations by noted graphic artists. I was surely only one of many to discover that there was richer and more brilliant substance to these advertisements than to many of the adjoining columns, and to learn the more general lesson in this way of how powerful art can be as a medium for intellectual expression.

All of that diverse and important Container Corporation collection, spanning the years from 1937 to 1982, has now come to the Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art. We are deeply indebted to Container, now a subsidiary of Mobil Corporation, for this impressive gift. I hope many SMITHSONIAN readers will find their way to the museum to see it (through January 19). It is testimony to the integrative vision of some exceptional people, bringing art and design once again together in their modern setting.



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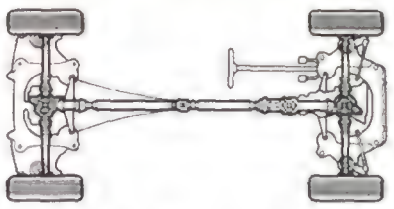

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Letters to the Editor

English country houses

Dear Sir: After reading your October article, my husband, instead of waiting four more years for a trip to England to celebrate our tenth anniversary, has decided to take me to the "elegant English country house" exhibition in December. He figures it will save him a lot of money. But I greatly suspect that seeing the exhibition will inspire him to make the trip anyhow.
Mrs. Richard F. Maier
Columbus, Ohio

Dear Sir: Israel Shenker relates that Nell Gwyn, the famous Restoration actress, called the Sixth Earl of Dorset her "Charles the First." However, Dorset was actually her Charles the Second; Nell's first Charles was Charles Hart, her partner in various comedies of the period. When Nell reached the exalted status of royal mistress, Charles II of England became her Charles the Third.
Rochelle Athey
Kent, Ohio

One-room schools

Dear Sir: Nine years of my childhood were spent in a one-room schoolhouse in Sherman County, Nebraska. At 34 years of age, I am one of the lucky few from my generation to have experienced this vanishing system.

There is no way to appropriately assess such an education. It provided the basic educational, motivational and value-systems framework that has allowed me to compete successfully in academics and my profession.

I salute families and teachers who keep the one-room school alive. Don't give up. It is an experience that must not become extinct.
Mardy Chizek
Memphis

Dear Sir: Your article took me back to my own years in a one-room prairie school near Rockham, Faulk County, South Dakota, in the 1930s and '40s.

And long before that, around 1910, my grandparents homesteaded in the Sand Hills of Nebraska. Right away, my grandfather, Jens Peter Nielsen, and two other settlers built sod houses and a one-room sod schoolhouse for their children.
Arlene Nielsen Tucker
Cupertino, California

Renoir

Dear Sir: In August I spent two hours walking three floors of the Grand Palais in Paris. Steeped in the majesty of Renoir's paintings and basking in the blue of his sky and the glow of gold, I experienced physical weariness, but an uplift of the soul.
W. L. Wiley
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Dear Sir: When Renoir and the Impressionists broke with the Salon in 1874, they paved the way for the various iconoclastic movements of the early 20th century. For those who believe the movements that followed—Cubism, Expressionism, Abstraction and Surrealism—stripped art of its fun and beauty, Renoir is a welcome breath of fresh air. His work spoke of joy and beauty, nothing else.

If it is true, as Cézanne once quipped, that "Monet is nothing but an eye—but what an eye!" then Renoir painted mere pictures—but what pictures!
Theodore D. Pappas
Rockford, Illinois

Dear Sir: Growing up in the western part of Massachusetts, I often visited one of the largest collections of Renoirs in the United States, at the Sterling and Francine Clark Museum in Williamstown—at least 30 paintings.

Each time I would see different aspects of my favorites, including *Dans la loge*, of which you show a detail on your cover.
Rhea Giunta
Miami

Shrews

Dear Sir: Recently my husband and I were witness to another mystery of shrew behavior. Early this September, while driving on an old woods road, our headlights illuminated a small animal perched on a branch five feet above the road.

In seconds, we were astonished to see the creature calmly leap off the tree to its death on the hard-packed dirt below.

We drove to the spot and stopped to see what it was. It was definitely a shrew. Another senseless shrewicide!
Jean A. Pfister
Stratton, Maine

Arlington House

Dear Sir: This was the house where Gen. Robert E. Lee made his decision to resign his commission in the Union Army and join the Confederate forces.

It is ironic that George Washington Parke Custis, anti-Jefferson and a Washington Federalist who was antislavery and pro-Union, was Lee's father-in-law.

But why did George Washington adopt his wife's grandson?
Norman C. Chapman
Calabasas, California

Custis' father, Jack, who had served as an aide to Washington, died a few days after the British surrender. As his widow had older children to look after, the General adopted the two youngest. Ed.

Mall

Dear Sir: On rare occasions organic matter emitted by forest fires forms droplets 500 nanometers across. Thus the moon's light is altered by scattering and can appear green or blue. This happened in September 1950, when a Canadian forest fire produced a "blue moon" visible in Europe.
Kurt Nassau
Bernardsville, New Jersey

Dear Sir: In January 1980, in the Eastern time zone, there were two full moons. In February of that year, no full moon. In March, two. And so in a period of three months we had two blue moons!

We also had a 29-day month with no full moon, which occurs, I believe, much less often than does a "blue moon."
A. C. Dickey jr.
Eatonton, Georgia

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Phenomena

Dear Sir: We don't miss the fertilizer when the martins leave at the end of August, but you are right, the place is like a morgue. To have to wait months, to hear the wondrous excitement of the whole colony when a fledgling first takes to the air, makes their return in April a most welcome event.
Dorothy P. Savage
Westhampton, New York

Art forgers

Dear Sir: The coins displayed in the picture on page 63 are not Roman coins, but coins of Alexander the Great.
Leopoldo Cancio
Washington, D.C.

Bah-oom, bah-oom . . .

Dear Sir: Richard Wolkomir is but a stripling in the world of pop song.

In my day, late 1930s/early '40s, we had such classics as ". . . the music goes round and round, whoa oh oh oh, oh oh, and comes out here" and "Mairzy Doats and Dozy Doats and lid-dle lam-zy di-vey." And now may we go back to my early childhood? From the late 1920s and early '30s, truly memorable phrases included "do whacka do whacka do whacka do," while the cornet or trumpet said the same thing when a derby hat was fanned over the mouth of the horn, "vo dodeo do," "boop boop a doop" and "with a hey nonny nonny and a hotchacha."
Joan Frances O'Brien
St. Charles, Illinois

Dear Sir: Your essay brings to mind an incident in Fillmore, California, in the early 1960s when, at noon and on special occasions, a carillon recording of sacred tunes would emanate from the public-address system in the cupola of a modest frame church.

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Roger W. Carter
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Around the Mall and beyond

In 1839, Agate drew mother and child on a South Sea island beach (detail).

The United States Exploring Expedition of 1838-42 was described in detail in last month's magazine, and the major exhibit based on this adventure opened a couple of weeks ago at the Museum of Natural History. I want to add here a newspaper "sidebar": During the four-year travail of putting this huge exhibit together, the Smithsonian rediscovered an American artist who had been lost to history.

The expedition's stiff-necked commander, Lt. Charles Wilkes of the U.S. Navy, took along nine civilians as his Scientific Corps. Two were artists, as necessary then as photographers are today to record events and discoveries.

Wilkes himself was no mean artist, as you will see at the exhibit. And none other than Titian Peale was aboard, too, though more in the capacity of naturalist than artist. One of the two chosen full-timers was a 26-year-old painter of miniatures, Alfred Taylor Agate. His delicate, detailed style must have pleased Wilkes, for, despite his tender years, he got the much sought honor of joining the "scientifics." Agate's work—fine little paintings and drawings of ships and people and island scenes (above)—makes you realize why the exhibit's organizer, Smithsonian historian Herman Viola, is so pleased to be displaying it for the first time.

Agate came from Sparta, New York, where he was born in 1812. His parents were English, and an older brother, Frederick Styles Agate, was also an artist and helped found the National Academy of Design. Alfred studied under Samuel F. B. Morse before joining the expedition. Nearly four years after returning home, Alfred died of tuberculosis, "consumption" it was called. He slipped from the national memory until now. He had married Elizabeth Hill Kennedy, and though the two had no children, his widow remembered him and handed along the memory to her children from a second marriage.

Elizabeth Hill Kennedy Agate DuHamel (if she cared to use all of her names) lived to be 93. She died four years before the same Academy of Design celebrated its centennial in 1925 and hung six Agate paintings. More than 200 other paintings, drawings and engravings, 188 of them dealing with the Wilkes expedition, remained with the DuHamels' daughter, Elizabeth. She also lived to a venerable age.

In 1945, Miss DuHamel asked the Navy Department if this Agate Collection could find a home there. The result was that the Naval Historical Foundation bought the lot, including a model of Wilkes' smallest vessel, the pilot schooner *Flying Fish*, for $500. The model was already on loan to the Smithsonian. It's now a uniquely appealing feature of another display at the Navy Memorial Museum in the Washington Navy Yard that opened in conjunction with the Smithsonian's Wilkes expedition exhibit.

The Agate art on the wall at Natural History brings the man back into focus. Wilkes thought enough of him during the wild voyaging to name a Fijian island after him. A botanist among the scientifics tagged some new plants with his Latinized name, *Agatea*. And during the exploration of our Northwest, Agate's name was slapped on a mountain pass and two beach towns, one in Washington, one in Oregon.

When Herman Viola and others at the Smithsonian consulted the Navy about Wilkes, Capt. David Long, Executive Director of the Naval Historical Foundation, dug up the Agate Collection, purchased 40 years ago, and loaned it. At last Agate has returned to the expedition.

I don't remember seeing an Agate painting of a shark. If he saw any, they wouldn't have been a match for the 40-footer depicted on the wall up in Dinosaur Hall. The sobering thing about this shark display is not the painted shape of the monster, but the fabricated jaws that hang beside it. They were reconstructed from a bunch of fossil teeth, and open wide enough to munch the front end of a Volkswagen Beetle.

The shark, *Carcharodon megalodon*, swam the seas perhaps four million years ago. It was an ancestor of the great white of *Jaws* fame, but about five great white jaws could fit into that mighty maw.

More surprising, in a way, is the fact that these jaws were created by the kind of scientific guesswork that is not guesswork at all, but an extension of existing information. After the fossil teeth were

Teeth-finder Harmatuk (top) and exhibit team framed by man-made jaws of shark.

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discovered by Peter Harmatuk (p. 22) in a North Carolina phosphate mine—and after he donated them to the Smithsonian—a team of scientists examined data about the ratio between tooth size and body size in today's sharks, made some complicated extrapolations and came up with an approximate picture of what *Carcharodon megalodon* looked like. They also created nearly 200 more teeth out of plastic to complete the awesome dentures.

Speaking of large sea creatures, I recently encountered another one—a meeting much more pleasurable than fearsome. It started on a seagoing trip when I decided to emulate my old friend Jack Wiley who recently, in one of his *Phenomena* columns in this magazine, described watching seabirds from the deck of a ship. I began doing the same thing, for we were off the coasts of Maine and Nova Scotia during the fall migration.

I puzzled over whether the birds that were following us were Wilson's petrels (maybe Jack knows). And every morning a couple of land birds would show up on deck, bewildered stowaways who had blundered toward the brightly lit ship in the night, and I would struggle over just who *they* were. I discovered two warblers of sorts and a grumpy sparrow, equally impossible for me to place exactly, except that he was no city slicker.

As we got into the St. Lawrence River I lost interest because of what was going on *in* the sea instead of over it. The waves seemed to be boiling with white bodies that loomed up and then disappeared, that rolled and flashed and blew vapor clouds and slapped the water with their tails. White, all of them.

"Whales," said the knowledgeable one (every ship has someone knowledgeable). "They're always here in the St. Lawrence." But I could learn nothing more until I returned home, consulted a copy of *The World's Whales*, published last year by Smithsonian Books, and found exactly what I had been seeing. They were belugas, white and gregarious, and, says the book, "They are regularly observed in the St. Lawrence and Saguenay rivers. . . ." When they appeared around our ship, we were at the mouth of the Saguenay. And incidentally, they are only about 16 feet long—less than half the size of that prehistoric shark with the jaws that are real Jaws.

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Phenomena, comment and notes

You won't find a coffee table in a biologist's office, and it may be a problem finding the biologist

A wildlife photographer I know carries through life the burden of a terrible secret: he gets paid for doing what he loves most in the world, and worries that the powers-that-be will find out and quickly put a stop to it. He spends as much time as he can in the field and brings back as much of the field as he can for the days he cannot get out.

Every once in a while I'll play hooky from the office for a day to join him on the quest for a bird or a bug. On those days we'll be paddling through a marsh or pushing deeper into a woods and he will laugh with delight as we chance upon an unexpected bird or the web of an unusually ambitious spider. Then he will recover quickly and caution me not to tell anyone we were having fun. Laden down with camera bodies, lenses so big they look like pieces of agricultural machinery, strobe units and tripods, he is difficult to keep up with in his excitement, especially weighted down as I am with a pen and fresh notebook. (It all evens out: he works for only one five-hundredth of a second at a time while it takes me five minutes to write something down.)

Occasionally on these trips we will stop in at the office of a biologist. I always marvel at those rooms, so different from my microenvironment back in the city. They are the offices of people much closer in spirit to my friend the photographer, much closer to the natural world than most of us. As workplaces, they are triumphs of substance over style, function

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over form. They do share features with conventional offices. Usually there is a desk, its surface protected by a heavy mulch of letters, articles, photocopies of scientific papers, journals, "to do" lists, telephone messages—the usual lot. And they tend to be lined with bookcases. But there the resemblance ends.

The distinguishing field mark of a biologist's office is the near absence of open floor. Nearly every square foot is taken up with shelving for jars of specimens, filing cabinets bulging with the literature of the field, or both. To reach the desk, you often have to turn sideways and sidle between the looming bulk of information. In certain circles, office design is a form of psychological warfare. Frequently the idea is to force a visitor to cross a long empty space until he or she reaches the insurmountable barrier of a massive desk, safely behind which sits the important person.

When you enter a biologist's office, you have to be persistent just to find the desk. Instead of a temple, you enter a maze. And after a minute or two of following passageways into dead ends, worrying about knocking a jar off a shelf, calling out nervously from time to time so you can home in on the response, you may find the desk but no biologist.

I have not found anything on this in the literature, but my own field observations have led me to the hypothesis that biologists are not really comfortable at desks. Scattered through the canyons of their territories they have worktables set up at strategic intersections, sometimes hidden under the same paper compost but more often covered with microscopes and specimens, light boxes and transparencies. These work stations are where biologists deal not with words on paper but with manifestations of life they can hold in their hands. Like chess masters playing many opponents at once, they move from table to table, problem to problem, as the day goes on.

Maps fill the odd patches of uncovered walls, and posters announce long-ago meetings. Memorabilia of trips to exotic places are scattered about: a sea fan, a skull, a strange hat. Plants grow in odd containers pressed into service after their original function has ended.

The nature photographer carries things a step further. His home is his office. There he maintains perfectly respectable shelves of books, files of scientific papers. But he has turned every inch of available space into a living library: aquariums and tanks everywhere in which he keeps live insects, reptiles, amphibians, creatures he is following through their life cycles or simply studying with the eye of an art student. You can see across these rooms, but you will look in vain for any unused horizontal surface on which to put something down.

Lately I've been thinking about my own office. It is perfectly adequate as offices go: desk, typewriter, telephone, wastebasket, bookshelves, even a map on the wall. But for all the human thought encapsulated in the paper on the desk, on top of the bookshelves and in rationalized piles on the floor, it is lifeless. I don't need great blocks of filing cabinets, and I have no jars of pickled frogs or starfish, so I'll fill the space with other things. Just inside the door will be a saltwater aquarium. Nothing big. Just a tank, perhaps six or eight feet long, two or three feet wide, two or three feet high. Nothing special. Just a few crabs, a few fish and some attractive bottom dwellers.

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A visitor will have to work his way around that tank to find me at the old desk, now redubbed Work Station No. 1. But that's too easy. So at the other end of the room (my office is beginning to sound like it's the size of the Great Hall in the Smithsonian castle but take my word for it, it is not) will be Work Station No. 2, a recliner for reading those really tough manuscripts.

The chair will be set in a dense grove of potted tropical shrubs and vines, with an iguana or two running loose to keep the insect population in check. If I tend the plants carefully, I'll be as hard to find as a biologist behind his data. (A friend at another magazine planted a banana tree in a tub behind his desk. It grew up to the ceiling, then forward over the desk and down, hiding the desk behind a wall of luxuriant foliage. It was hard to tell if Harold was in or out.)

All such efforts, real or fantasy, are noble, and they make for more congenial work spaces than the sterile results of office planners. Yet even the most extravagant plan is not enough. The yearning for the real thing can be satisfied only by going to the source.

One October day the photographer and I called on a biologist at one of the laboratories that study the Chesapeake Bay. We toured his office (typical biologist habitat) and continued on to the experimental hatcheries. By 2 P.M. we had finished our formal business and by the protocols of the office world it was time to leave. We did—the three of us jumped into a car and headed for a national wildlife refuge a little farther down the bay. We looked at widgeon and teal, great blue herons and Canada geese. We photographed yellow-headed blackbirds out of their normal range and watched a pond full of ducks and herons scatter as a bald eagle sailed over them.

We went all the way around the refuge twice that afternoon and finally reached the exit about 6, a time when lights are going out in offices. The light was going out here, too, as the sun set behind the western shore. We watched geese coming in from every point of the compass, shape-changing lines in the sky that appeared over distant trees and grew into cacophonous flights of Canadas and snows. It grew too dark for pictures, but still we kept watching the big birds drop into a field. The "work day" was over but we lingered on: nobody wanted to leave. No office will ever come close.

John P. Wiley jr.

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By Noel Vietmeyer

Exotic edibles are altering America's diet and agriculture

A revolution in U.S. produce industry is bringing us different foods from all parts of the world—and there's more to come

Chris Rollins is as solidly built as a linebacker for the Miami Dolphins. But Chris is a Floridian with a more gentle occupation: he tends close to 500 different species and varieties of tropical fruit trees as director of the Fruit and Spice Park in Homestead. He is also a man with a mission. There are about 3,000 fruits in the tropics, and Chris plans to get as many as he possibly can into commercial production and out into the American diet.

The 1980s is a good time for him. "It's getting really exciting," he says. "You just wait till you see what's coming! In South Florida we used to plant lemons and grapefruit; now we're into carambolas and mamey. Some growers are cutting down limes and avocados and putting in longans, lychees, atemoyas and sugar apples. One is tearing out citrus and putting in jakfruit—he'll probably get $10 to $15 per fruit. Jakfruit ice cream is sensational!"

To most of us these are unusual fruits. But to people who live in various parts of the tropics they are much-beloved foods. Jakfruit, a native of Southeast Asia, is the world's largest tree fruit and can weigh 60 pounds or more. Its yellow filling has a musky flavor unlike anything Westerners now know. Lychee is luscious and plum-size, and the Chinese consider it superior to oranges and peaches. Longan is its smaller relative. Carambola is from Southeast Asia and its yellow sides are so deeply indented that slicing one across produces an eye-catching five-pointed star. Atemoya and sugar apple are knobby and peach-size with soft flesh that tastes something like a cross between a pineapple and a banana. Mamey is known as the national fruit of Cuba, and Cubans, it could be said, will walk a mile for a mamey!

Scores of such exotic Asian and Latin American fruits, as well as vegetables, herbs, spices and even a dozen or so mushrooms, are now entering the American food chain. Already our supermarket shelves carry myriad items few of us have ever seen before. Foods of the Philippines, China, Indochina, Mexico, Cuba, Central and South America, and the West Indies are appearing and are selling briskly. Many will end up being as American as apple pie (a common food in 12th-century England), pizza (Italy), dehydrated potato (Peru), peanuts (Brazil), sweet potato (Caribbean), black-eyed peas (Africa), soybeans (China) and popcorn (Peru).

We are rapidly getting the most democratic and cosmopolitan diet in the world, and this is providing vast new horticultural opportunities that are changing the

Fruits and vegetables displayed here are all sold in South Florida supermarkets, many grown locally.

Photographs by John Dominis

In Florida orchard, Chris Rollins slices a pummelo, a grapefruitlike fruit he thinks will be big hit here.

fundamentals of the produce industry. Scientists and entrepreneurs are now scouring the globe not just for different strains of wheat, but for surprising new fruits and vegetables that with modern transportation can be marketed worldwide.

Recently, Chris Rollins drove me around South Florida to glimpse some of these future foods and the beginnings of the new, ethnic complement to American agriculture. The first stop was down a half-country, half-suburban street, just around the corner from Chris' park near the southern tip of Florida. It looked like a transplanted bit of Asia. Two old men squatted between the rows, almost hidden beneath conical bamboo hats. The owner, Susan Baterna, was picking bottle gourds from vines growing along the high wire fence fronting the road: "We're trying to grow all the Philippine vegetables," she explained.

Behind her was a riot of mingled fruit trees and vegetable plants that I hardly recognized: calamondins (a sour, limelike fruit used to season fish and meats), snake gourds, bitter melons, yard-long beans, horseradish trees (the leaves and pods are used as cooked vegetables), chayote-de-agua (a pear-shaped squash with a taste halfway between cucumber and apple) and a sweet-potato variety whose leaves are customarily eaten like spinach.

Susan is a dynamic young person but not what one would expect to find on the front lines of change in agriculture. She is slight of stature and this day her open-necked shirt, light blue pants and muddy boots are strangely offset by a gold watch, gold ring and pearl earrings. I learn that in addition to being a farmer she is the dietician at a local hospital.

"Everybody likes winged beans"

In the open-sided packing shed in the center of the field, Susan hands me winged bean pods. They are pastel green, about the length of my hand, and have four frilly edges. They are crunchy and appealing. "We use them in mixed vegetables or with fish or shrimp," she says. "Everybody likes them. We just can't provide our distributor with enough!"

She then cuts up a jicama root. On the outside it looks like an ugly turnip, but inside the flesh is white and gleaming. She pours water over it and I find it sweet, and crunchy as a freshly picked apple.

The Filipino fruits and vegetables from this small plot end up in markets as far away as Detroit, Chicago and New York. Susan and her husband, Robert, cannot keep up with the demand. They have brought over elderly relatives from the Philippines to help grow more, and since I visited they have rented extra land just for planting more winged beans.

"I really enjoy this," Susan says. "It's exciting to

On Homestead, Florida, farm, Susan and Robert Baterna harvest their bumper crop of winged beans. They are specializing in Philippine vegetables and finding they can sell as much as they can produce.

grow things and have somebody want them!" And her experience is hardly unique. Throughout the nation, the demand for Oriental and Latino foods is rising fast, and in various areas immigrants, like the Baternas, are bringing us the crops of their homelands. Vietnamese are growing lemongrass; Indian immigrants are tending curry plants and ivy gourds (they look like baby cucumbers); Cubans are producing malanga (a starchy root), boniato (a dry-fleshed sweet potato) and calabaza (which looks like a pumpkin); and West Indians are raising dasheen (a form of taro root) and pigeon peas.

North America is now in a situation like that of Europe at the time of Columbus. Then, Europeans lived happily on their few traditional crops such as wheat, rye, cabbage and dried peas. But the galleons and caravels returning from Central and South America suddenly introduced a cornucopia of new fruits and vegetables. They were the traditional foods of the Aztecs, Incas and other American Indians: potatoes, sweet potatoes, peanuts, red and green peppers, tomatoes, pumpkins and squashes, beans, corn, pineapple, chocolate and vanilla, not to mention tobacco for smoking.

To the people of Europe these were revolutionary new tastes. They resisted them. The tomato was denounced as being toxic. The potato was shunned as ungodly because it was not mentioned in the Bible (many people insisted that it caused leprosy and other dread diseases). It actually took seven years of study before the British government would officially approve potatoes to be eaten . . . by cattle!

But eventually most of the new crops became fundamental parts of European cuisine. Can you imagine Italian food without tomatoes? Spanish food without chiles? German food without potatoes? French desserts without vanilla?

Today in North America, in just the same way, exotic crops from across the seas are moving out into the mainstream of the diet, but the move is occurring much faster and with less resistance.

Already, in the nation's heartland—Des Moines or Omaha—you'll find widespread use of Oriental and Mexican vegetables. Houston has some of the best Vietnamese restaurants in the world. The Los Angeles area has more than 200 Thai restaurants. Mexican fast food has become a $1.6 billion industry covering the whole country—even Barrow, Alaska, north of the Arctic Circle, has a Mexican restaurant. And springing up throughout the land are Ethiopian, Afghan, Brazilian and other exotic ethnic eating places. Indeed, it is no longer enough for a restaurant to be just Chinese; it may be Szechuan, Hunan or Shanghai, but also Suzhou, Hangzhou or some other ethnic specialty within an ethnic specialty.

Actually we are assimilating new foods so fast that there seems to be a change in the American psyche.

Noel Vietmeyer is a researcher with the National Academy of Sciences working with exotic plants. He wrote about poison ivy in August's SMITHSONIAN.

Tindora, a cucumberlike vegetable from India, is used in stir fries, salads.

Winged beans from Philippines can be steamed, stir fried and used raw with dips.

Sugar apples from South America seer

Ceriman, from American tropics, can be eaten raw, in milk shakes or ice cream.

Tamarind from Africa is a condiment used in chutney, sauces and drinks.

Chinese longan, similar to a lychee,

Yuca (or cassava) is a fibrous root from American tropics, like a potato.

Malanga of the West Indies is starchy tuber also cooked, eaten like potato.

Atemoya, from tropical America,

"More and more people are more adventurous in trying new food than ever before," notes Jay Kleinfeldt of the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association in Alexandria, Virginia.

That observation is echoed by supermarket executive Robert Backovich. "I've been with Safeway for 30 years," he says, "and I've seen the produce industry change more in the last ten years than ever before, and I feel that it will change at an increasing rate in the next five years."

Backovich directs the produce division of the world's largest food retailer. With more than 2,400 stores in five countries, Safeway serves four million customers a day, has the world's largest privately owned tractor-trailer fleet and purchases millions of products a year.

"As each year passes, our company's involvement in produce grows in leaps and bounds," Backovich says. "We have an international department looking at new fruits and vegetables coming from all over the world. We're looking for new and different things and we're finding more and more daily.

"It's a revolution. Exotic produce is no longer called

like a cross of pineapple, banana.

Mamey, Cuba's national fruit, is eaten fresh and in milk shakes, ice cream.

Carambola, Malaysian fruit is sliced into stars, makes salads, desserts, jellies.

can be eaten either dried or fresh.

Bitter melon from Southeast Asia is cooked and stuffed like pepper.

Chayote is a squash from Mexico that is cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

is a custardlike dessert fruit.

Pummelo is tropical Asian ancestor of grapefruit, without bitterness.

Jakfruit from India is cooked or eaten raw; seeds are boiled like chestnuts.

exotic, it's a central part of the produce business. Today the consumer considers the produce section the number-one reason for selecting a supermarket, and the variety of new and different items is the number-two reason."

This interest from the supermarkets makes Chris Rollins ecstatic. "We used to have to push stores to carry rare fruits; now the produce industry is coming to us," he notes. "A few years back we'd say to the local packer, 'Hey, why don't you buy these?' He'd say, 'I can't, I'm in this for money.' But all of a sudden there is money in it. The public mood has changed. It's exciting. There are going to be many new things."

Chris took me to Hialeah, on the outskirts of Miami, to see the Xtra Super Food Center. "It's the forerunner of the future," he promised as we got near the place.

It was. The produce of the world—red, yellow, white, green, speckled; long and thin, round, flat, bumpy, smooth, rough and fuzzy—was piled high. There were unfamiliar items everywhere: arugula (an Italian herb), radicchio (a chicory from Italy that looks like a baby red cabbage), celeriac (celery root), ajicahuc (the

In the Everglades, firefighter and part-time farmer Ed Castleberry harvests his bananas with a machete.

leaves and flowers of a South American nasturtium), manzanos (minibananas), name (a type of yam from Brazil) and tamarindo (sweet-sour pods that are the "secret" ingredient in Worcestershire sauce). There were sprouts of many types, five kinds of basil, black radish, wheatgrass, crowder peas (a coarse bean in red and green pods) and much more.

"All that stuff sells," produce manager Ken Lanhardt told me. "We run out of them and people call and want to know when the next truck is arriving. The produce department is our bread and butter. We carry as much variety as we can—about 400 different fruit and vegetable items during a year."

The queen of specialty produce, Frieda Caplan, blames the retail produce buyers for the lack of choice in the past. "People have been adventurous all along," she says, "but the supermarkets were interested only in large-volume items and convinced themselves that the public wanted only traditional produce."

Frieda, a produce merchandiser and wholesaler located in Los Angeles, has been educating the American public to new tastes since 1962 when she imported kiwifruit from New Zealand. Most supermarkets then refused to handle it. "They just didn't believe that American consumers would buy a brown fuzzy fruit unlike anything they had previously known," she explains. So, as an incentive, she gave supermarkets ten free boxes of kiwis for every 100 boxes they bought. For four years she made no profit on kiwis, but now those fuzzy brown fruits are accepted nationwide. Last year more than ten million Americans bought them.

During the past 24 years Frieda has introduced some 200 different fruits and vegetables. In supermarkets from coast to coast her bright purple packages enclose the weirdest-looking items under the sun: wrinkled yellow mushrooms looking like spineless monsters from outer space, fat paddlelike cactus leaves, passion fruit resembling shriveled black eggs, chayotes like large, fat green grenades, heart-shaped yellow pepinos with jagged purple streaks, and knobby brown Jerusalem artichokes that seem to be barely edible but are in fact delicious.

It is understandable that California and Florida lead the trend toward growing exotic tropical fruits and vegetables. For those states, war, revolution and economic hard times have unleashed a flood of refugees from the Caribbean, Central America and Southeast Asia. They have brought their crops with them—and they are no small minority. Although the U.S. population has increased 17 percent since 1970, the Hispanic population has risen an estimated 87 percent and the Asian population 127 percent.

Recently a woman wrote to the U.S. Department of Agriculture complaining that its study on the nutritional quality of ethnic foods was a waste of taxpayers' dollars. "If they're going to live in this country," she asked, "why don't they learn to eat American?"

What she and most people don't realize is that—despite its great size and its variety of soils, climate and topography—the United States is poor in native eco-

Demand for exotic bananas is so great that grocers come to grove from Miami and cut them themselves.

nomic plants. We would starve if forced to live off truly U.S. crops. Those that are native within our own borders are only sunflower, Jerusalem artichoke, wild rice, pecans, cranberry, blueberry, Concord grapes and a motley collection of minor roots, nuts and berries. Contrary to what most Americans think, corn, beans and squash are not native. They were here when the Pilgrims arrived, but Indians had carried the seeds up from Central America in earlier times. Only south of the border can scientists find the ancestral species and varieties that indicate those crops' birthplaces.

Today's immigrants are just continuing their predecessors' traditions. Slaves brought us the peanut from Africa (where the Portuguese had earlier introduced it from Brazil). Mennonites fleeing Russia in the early 1870s brought wheat seed that proved so tolerant of harsh winters that by 1919 nearly 99 percent of the hard red winter wheat in our Great Plains came from this Russian stock. Japanese immigrants introduced superior rice varieties, and by the early 1920s about 85 percent of all California's rice was of Japanese origin.

As with those earlier introductions, the new ethnic crops are spreading out into mainstream agriculture and are being taken up by American farmers. In our tour of South Florida, Chris Rollins took me to meet Ed Castleberry, a descendant of European colonists who came over before the American Revolution.

To reach Ed's modest house it is a bumpy drive down grassy trails between rows of small applelike trees that fill his 7.5 acre lot near the Everglades National Park. Ed is a firefighter and he looks the part: husky, muscular and in his early 30s. "This is a real good part-time job," he says, pointing to his trees hanging with fruits of strange shape and color. "We can sell everything we produce. On these carambolas I'll make good money this year—$5,000 an acre on carambolas!"

Chris interjects to explain that the carambola, or starfruit, seems poised to sweep the nation. It provides edible yellow stars to brighten seafoods, salads and desserts or to float in a punch bowl or martini. He picks one for me and I find that it is very juicy, with a sweet flavor. "It can do better than the kiwifruit," he says, "more eye appeal. It's a surefire success. It'll be as big as avocado!"

We pass from the open orchardlike area into Ed's banana grove. It has the feeling of a forest. Sunlight sparkles through the splits in the giant leaves that bend overhead; the ground is springy with humus, the air is soft and scented. "For somebody who doesn't know much about farming, this is what to get into—bananas," he says. "Nothing to do. No spraying. I don't thin them or anything—can't afford the labor. Just throw on a little fertilizer and they keep on going."

The bananas are not the usual kind. They are small and reddish. Their thin skins make them difficult to ship long distances, so they've been bypassed by international commerce despite their appealing taste. "I had some dwarf Cavendish [the type usually found in supermarkets] and I couldn't give them away," notes Ed, "but as soon as any of these are available, Cuban grocers come out from Miami and are ready to cut them themselves."

Using guard dogs against fruit rustlers

Ed gets 35 cents a pound for his apple bananas—which have a distinctive applelike flavor—and as much as 65 cents a pound for the red Orinocos. And some of his bunches weigh as much as 30 pounds. No wonder his friend down the road is pulling out limes and putting in bananas.

As we wander among the trees sampling the fruit, three ragged guard dogs trail along, eating up the leftovers. Rare fruits sell at such high prices that poaching has become a problem. The one the fruit rustlers seek most is mamey, the Cuban national fruit. It is brown-skinned and grenade-shaped with salmon or bright-red flesh; it has the texture of avocado and a sweet

Xtra Super Food Market in South Miami sells more than 400 different kinds of fruits, vegetables a year.

taste with a note of chestnut in it. It sells for about $4 a pound and sometimes goes up to $11 a pound, Rollins tells me. The harvest from one large tree can bring in a thousand dollars, and most growers have to surround their orchards with high fences and guard the trees with attack dogs.

Of the 3,000 fruits in the tropics, some of the most loved—rambutan, mangosteen, durian, guanabana and uvilla, for example—are still not available in this country. One fruit that is here—but that Rollins, to his chagrin, has had little success in getting farmers to grow commercially—is the pummelo. It is his favorite and is probably one of the grapefruit's ancestors. (No one knows the grapefruit's origins; a ship's captain mysteriously brought it to Barbados in the late 1700s, probably from the South Seas.) "I give hundreds of people a taste of pummelo each year," Chris says. "They almost all like it and most ask, 'Where can I buy it?' Our problem is to keep people from associating it with grapefruit—it's so much better!"

But it's not even necessary for exotic produce to be grown locally or even in the United States for it to get into our supermarkets. Today's air freight, refrigerated containers and specialized packaging means that highly perishable fruits and vegetables picked even in distant New Zealand or Chile can be on the nation's supermarket shelves in the peak of freshness within days. Many stay within one degree of their prime storage temperature from soon after picking to the time the consumer puts them in the shopping basket.

Global shipments monitored by satellite

In the future even extremely perishable products might be handled routinely. For example, some soft fruits are now being individually wrapped in foam plastic. And an Oakland shipping line is even fitting its containers with microprocessors, with an eye to satellite-communications links so that the produce inside can be monitored remotely and its temperature adjusted, no matter on what ocean or rail system the container happens to be.

This potential to transport perishable items long distances is changing the agriculture of the world. Many other nations now know more about American food habits and our market trends than most Americans, and they are converting their farm output to match our changing desires.

"We've seen imported specialty items just come alive in the past five years," John Williams, a produce importer from Tampa, told me. "Snow peas, for example. Ten years ago they were nothing, now they're in every supermarket. They're coming in from Honduras in loads of up to 50,000 pounds a week, and every plane from Guatemala is bringing them in, too."

This global integration of horticulture is occurring in many lands. Mexico, for example, is exporting its traditional vegetables (tomatillos, jicamas and chiles) in a big way. New Zealand fruit growers made fortunes shipping the kiwifruit and now are developing other exotic-tasting fruits such as feijoa, cape gooseberry, tamarillo, babaco, pepino and cherimoya—all with export in mind.

Undoubtedly this is the beginning of a global cuisine that is based on the world's diversity of fruits and vegetables, rather than the homogeneity of fast foods. Indeed, with today's communications and transportation we have the choice of virtually any edible plant that can be domesticated. That is a lot: there are an estimated 20,000 edible plants in the world. Perhaps only 1,000 of them have an international future, but that still means that the variety in our diet would increase tenfold, because only about 100 of the world's plant species have so far been significantly developed as food crops.

Introducing a new crop is not without its problems. There are enormous scientific challenges: varieties to collect and evaluate, cultivation techniques to learn, storage and handling procedures to be developed. Atemoya, for example, is a good fruit with a great future, but it is highly perishable and there are insect and packing problems still to be overcome.

There are educational problems, too. Robert Backovich recalls that the first shipments of passion fruit to Safeway stores were returned as unsalable—the produce managers didn't realize that the fruit is *supposed* to be wrinkled when fully ripe.

And there are operational problems. In the 1970s Robert Knight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture introduced a carambola variety from Thailand that has large, sweet fruit. But today demand for carambolas is so high that packers are shipping all they can get—which means mostly a variety of small, bitter ones that are unimproved. Rollins and other enthusiasts fear that the public will be turned off carambolas before it gets to taste the best types.

But generally these problems can be worked out, and researchers and entrepreneurs all over the world are producing many new food crops. In earlier generations chiles, garlic, artichokes, avocados and olives may have been known to some parts of the society, but now they are universal. And other items that were almost entirely unknown in the past—bean sprouts, kiwifruit, tofu and snow peas, for instance—are now widely accepted. Such vast changes are probably in store for us, too. Indeed, it can be said that North America is becoming a great melting pot of produce. It is a botanical adventure whose results cannot be foreseen.

"We have great opportunities, and we haven't seen the end," predicts Safeway's Backovich. "You just wait till you experience the what's-coming-next!" says irrepressible Chris Rollins. He's got his eye on rambutans, mangosteens, Malay apples, pulasans, guanabana, guarana and hundreds of others. And every day he's hoping that someone he gives the pummelo to will join the few pioneers now planting the first pummelo orchards in North America.

Dessert of star-shaped carambola, slices of guava, half a passion fruit typify the exotic new cuisine. These fruits are among those proving so popular they may eventually become "as American as apple pie."

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The New Accord

By Vance Bourjaily

Red Lewis' town is kinder to him than he was to it

Novelist Sinclair Lewis wrote a stinging portrait of his hometown, but Sauk Centre, Minnesota, doesn't hold it against him

With its tree-lined streets and picturesque church steeples, Sauk Centre today bears little resemblance to the provincial prairie village that Lewis tore apart in *Main Street*. He was born here a century ago.

Its population is just under 4,000. Its chief east-west street is named for the first American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Local radio plays polka music night and day. The high school athletic teams here are known as the "Streeters." Twice in the past nine years the school for which the Streeters play has been closed down by teachers' strikes. The town went for Mondale over Reagan in the last election. Fourth of July comes and goes without a public celebration; instead, there are a parade and fireworks the following week, celebrating the Nobel Laureate. The economy is based primarily on agriculture and dairy products.

You may spend the night here in a small restored hotel, or you may choose to stay at one of several inelegant fishing resorts on the weedy lake that begins at the town's north end. There's a pretty good restaurant on a prettier lake nearby, where the featured gourmet item is walleyed pike, cooked in several ways. Another lakeside establishment, a nightclub, was burned down by an arsonist early this year in a blaze that killed two volunteer firemen.

Here we have the archetypal Midwestern small town, do we not? What we have is Sauk Centre, Minnesota, where Harry Sinclair Lewis was born a hundred

Photographs by John Madere

The Sinclair Lewis Interpretive Center

In September 1947, Lewis paused in front of the Main Street Theater on his last visit to Sauk Centre.

Theater sign still looms over Original Main Street near Sinclair Lewis Avenue, but now has competition.

years ago. "A gawky, sensitive child," reads an almost disparaging iron sign erected by the Minnesota Historical Society in front of the Sinclair Lewis Boyhood Home, "who achieved little success in school and was the brunt of every crude piece of horseplay. . . ." If this is accurate, Lewis got 'em back in 1920 with some fairly crude horseplay of his own: his seventh novel, *Main Street*, aimed at tearing American small-town life limb from comical limb. Sauk Centre, recognizing people and places, was furious. Much of the rest of the country was savagely delighted.

Main Street is the story of how pretty Carol Kennicott comes to a town that Lewis called Gopher Prairie as the bride of a well-established doctor named Will Kennicott. Carol is vivacious, independent and college-educated. She's been encouraged to feel that she has arrived from the relatively sophisticated environs of Minneapolis and St. Paul as some kind of cultural missionary to the heathens. She is as determined to bring art and letters to Gopher Prairie as Dr. Will and his friends are to make their town a great center of business and industry. They are all, it turns out, equally ineffectual.

Carol can't so much as get the ladies of the Thanatopsis Club to devote more than one meeting to a study of the British poets—*all* of them. Will's bunch, boosters and joiners, spend their time preaching to the already converted, which is to say, to one another. Between 1910 and 1920, the span of the novel, Gopher Prairie remains drab, self-satisfied and boorish. At the end, Carol has gained a little personal freedom for herself but she is reconciled to the life that her husband wants for them. She joins the rest of the local cast as an object of Lewis' ridicule.

I stayed in Sauk Centre for a time this year, looking around, chatting with people and rereading the novel. Two things have been taken for granted ever since it was published 65 years ago: that Gopher Prairie is Sauk Centre, and that Sauk Centre exemplifies American small-town life. I was thoughtless enough to accept both assumptions myself until I went there. Now I understand that although Sauk Centre is not unlike many other small towns, it also, like them, possesses some individuality. It is unique. And while it may resemble its literary counterpart in some ways, it is not Gopher Prairie anymore, if indeed it ever was.

Vance Bourjaily, a novelist who taught in Iowa for many years, now directs the graduate writing program at Louisiana State University.

The Odd Fellows Hall (behind Pamida sign) is only building shown here that survives from Lewis era.

When Lewis was working on *Main Street*, the big city was becoming the wellspring of American economic and cultural life. The small town supposedly was dying out and "provincialism" was a favorite target of writers and other intellectuals. Recently, however, country life in general and small towns in particular have acquired a new luster. More and more people are tuning their radios to *A Prairie Home Companion*, reading host Garrison Keillor's stories about a mythical Minnesota town called Lake Wobegon and wishing that they could reside in such a benign and intimate place. Last spring a nationwide Gallup poll revealed that three times as many people would prefer to live in a small town as in a large city. Yet even so, as Lewis' biographer Mark Schorer has pointed out, "the image of American village life that Lewis created . . . remains pretty much . . . the image that most of us still hold today."

Lewis dealt not in satire, which I take to be a fairly subtle form with some elegance and range to it, but in burlesque, which exaggerates a few features and sees no charm in complexity, ambiguity or paradox. *Main Street* picks easy targets and belabors them over and over with the same rubber bladder. Perhaps that's why it had such an extraordinary effect on the nation's self-awareness. You didn't have to have sensibilities that were refined in graduate school to get the point.

What started me off toward this way of thinking was something I learned about those Sauk Centre athletes, whose full nom de guerre is Main Streeters. The book from which their name derives is one that few of them will ever read. I'd been told by one or two townspeople that *Main Street* was required reading over at the high school, but when I visited with one and another of the English teachers there they just smiled at the idea. "We used to try to include the book in senior lit," Mary K. Mayer told me. Her husband is a dentist, whose office is in the same building that figures in the novel as Dave Dyer's drugstore. "The kids had a word for it—boring." Mary K. is a tall, authoritative, humorous woman who understands perfectly well the kind of frustration *Main Street*'s heroine met in trying to get Gopher Prairie to smarten up. "I used to tell my husband every year that I was going to award a Carol Kennicott prize," she said. "But then I'd always wind up having to give it to myself."

Mary K. is ineligible this year, I would think, because she did get a handful of her students through the novel in an elective course. Yvonne Kinney, who is 18 and blonde, was one of them. "I thought the book was interesting," she said, bringing me breakfast as part of the waitress job that would help her get to col-

Teacher Mary K. Mayer, working with a class at the high school, says students think *Main Street* is boring.

David Jacobson, head of Lewis Foundation, and Mary Hanson, Lewis home guide, show family chess set.

Novelist's restored boyhood home is run as a tourist attraction by the local Sinclair Lewis Foundation.

lege. What I learned from Yvonne was that Mary K. Mayer had the wit to teach *Main Street* as a feminist book, which in many ways it is.

David Jacobson, who used to be a teacher and is now education coordinator for a trade group called the Independent Bankers Association of America, is president of the Sinclair Lewis Foundation, which oversees various memorial activities and enterprises. When I told him I thought any curious local kid would want to read *Main Street* for the pleasure of knowing what his town was like back then and recognizing whatever is still there today, he shook his head. *Main Street* doesn't deal with the whole town, he pointed out, but only with the members of a dozen professional and merchant families whose descendants are no longer in Sauk Centre, or at least no longer prominent there. In addition, some changes made by the author—probably in pursuit of typification—and innumerable others wrought by time and technology, leave little to be recognized other than a few old buildings. The book begins, after all, before the First World War and ends just after it.

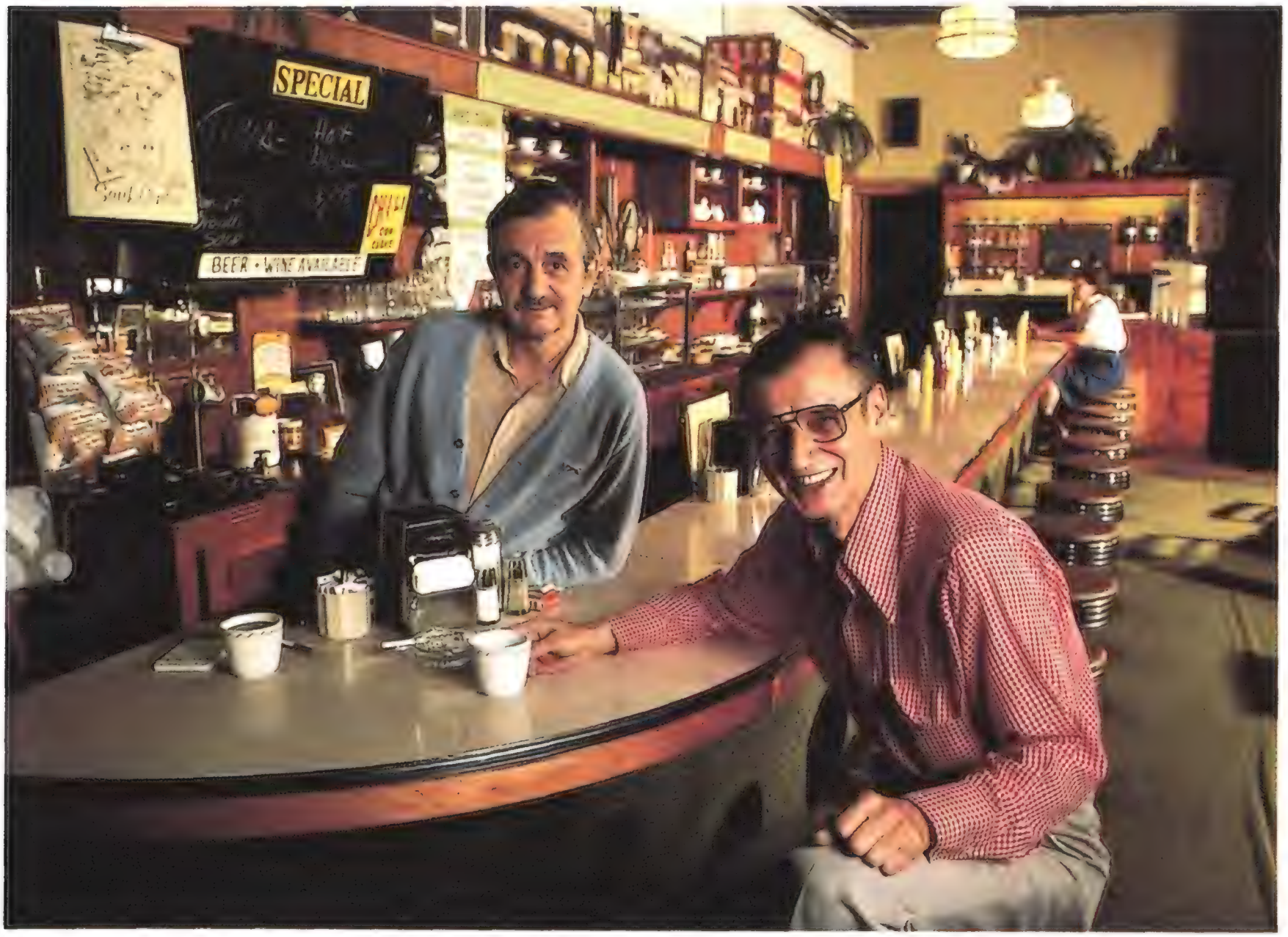
Lewis made Gopher Prairie a flatland center of grain raising. Sauk Centre, in Stearns County, is on the edge of the prairie, in a landscape of cleared woodland and lakes, mildly hilly, with wet soil that is suited to raising alfalfa, oats, a little corn and a lot of dairy cattle.

Sauk Centre began, in the middle of the last century, as a lumber-mill town, and shortly thereafter built a stockade in which pioneer families took refuge from the Sioux. At about that time the railroad com-

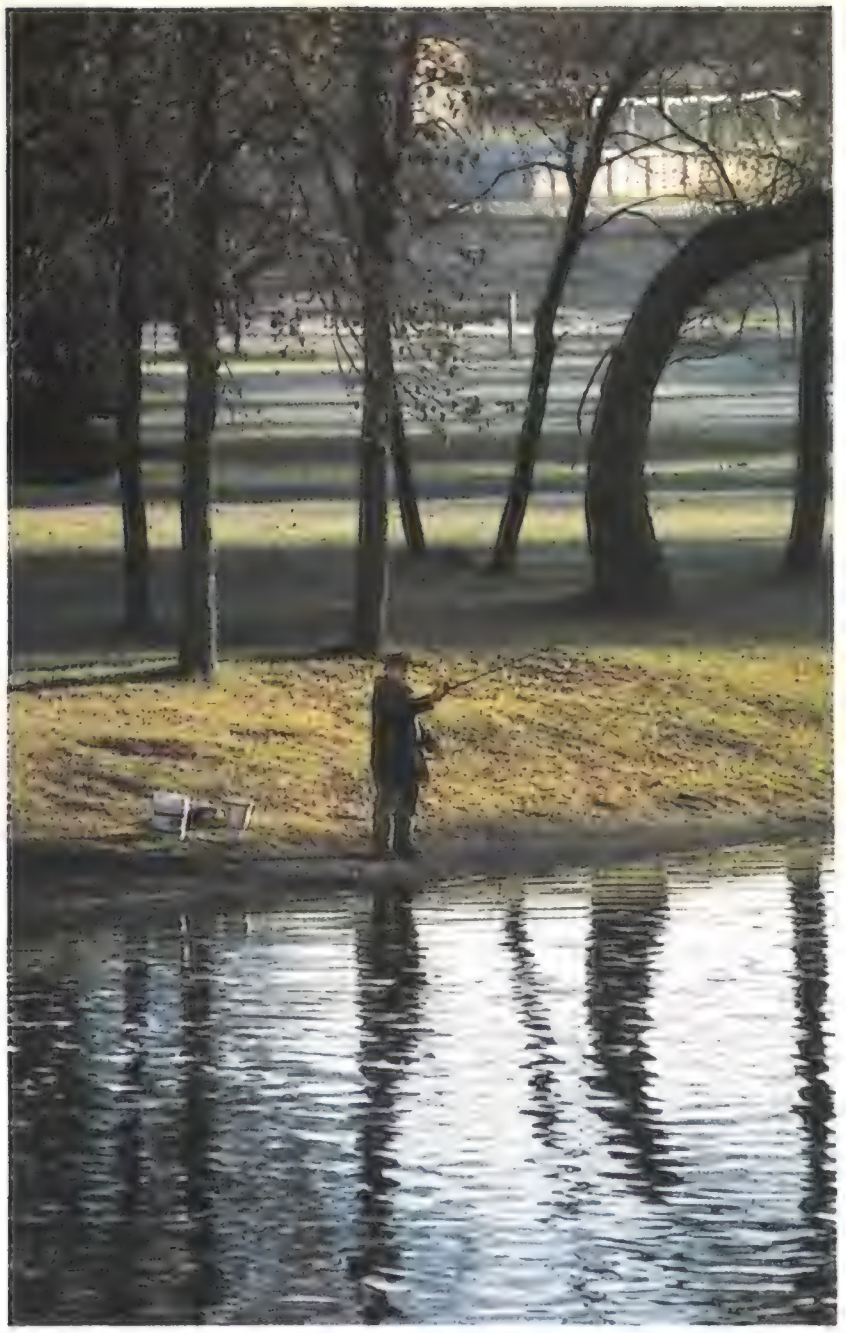
panies sent recruiters to Europe to persuade German and Scandinavian farmers to settle in the Upper Midwest. You can hear that heritage in the local accent and in all of that polka music on the radio. In the novel, there are still first-generation immigrants who speak comic English. They are exploited and laughed at, except that their liberal political ideas would be considered dangerous if they weren't so stupid. And their religion, Catholicism, particularly in its acceptance of hierarchical authority, is dismissed as ludicrous. Gopher Prairie's establishment was fundamentalist Republican and straight Protestant.

The book makes only passing mention of trouble between the Germans and the gentry during the First World War. In fact, Sauk Centre nearly split wide open. In the beginning the isolationism of the conservative "first families" made it merely dumb that the German farmers took a war in Europe so seriously. The farmers' leader, a priest called Father Artz, would arrive at the post office in the middle of the afternoon when the battle reports came in, furious if there were German reverses, crowing at successes and emphasizing both reactions by banging on the floor with a heavy cane. He was thought formidable but daffy.

When America finally did enter the war, the Germans suddenly became objects of serious suspicion and it must have bred in them cohesion and defiance. By then their children were growing up educated, moving into town, beginning to take over white-collar jobs and small businesses. When the older people retired, they too moved into Sauk Centre. They were becoming an economic, religious and political majority. Regionally, many of those people were beginning to follow Robert La Follette, the Progressive senator from Wisconsin who stood for the common man. Sauk Centre remained staunchly Republican for a time, but Minnesota began to vote the Farmer-Labor ticket and then became the political base for Democrat Hubert Humphrey. The group in *Main Street* that met at Dave Dyer's drugstore would have been appalled—



Al Tingley (right) and his partner Richard Schwartz drink coffee in restaurant of the Palmer House, an inn they are restoring. During the summers of 1902 and 1903, Lewis worked at the hotel as a night clerk.



Fisherman tries out his luck on the Sauk River, which runs from lake where young Lewis swam and rafted.

perhaps frightened—at such a radical turn of events.

Knowing this background, I shouldn't have been surprised to learn that Sauk Centre's teachers are organized, militant and frequently at odds with the taxpayers whose children are entrusted to them. The one teacher who figured most prominently in the Gopher Prairie cast, spinsterly Vida Sherwin, wasn't at odds with anybody. She was on the fringe of the group in power, trying hard to impress and please, wanting to be an insider, and she finally made it by marrying the town wimp. There's been no such homey solution to the dissatisfaction of today's teachers in Sauk Centre. On the heels of the two recent strikes over wages and working conditions, there may well be a third.

Gopher Prairie's farm economy seems to have been prosperous enough for everyone to get along comfortably. Currently in Stearns County the unemployment rate is more than six percent, and many farmers are afflicted by the same problems that burden others throughout the Midwest. A widowed farm woman from whom I bought eggs, at 60 cents a dozen, said she'd be glad to sell her place for $600 an acre if she could get it, though that would be less than half its value five years ago. With this going on, many people feel that the teachers, making $14,000 to $21,000 a year, are damned well off.

The teachers believe that they're due for a raise but they also want something equally important: respect. One of the most brilliant and dedicated members of the staff, Bernie Gruber, committed suicide not long before the second strike. Some of his colleagues feel that one cause of his despair was the indifference of the town to the quality of its schooling, a lack of support that the students themselves sensed, becoming inattentive and unresponsive in the classrooms.

If disunity can lead to tragedy in Sauk Centre, things can go the other way, too. When I asked Dave Jacobson what brings the town together, he said: "One of the things that can unite us is a tragedy." He told me about the nightclub fire and the deaths of the two firemen. Dave Kane, who co-owned a trucking firm, and Doug Zabel, who sold insurance, were on the deck of the building when it caved in, dropping them into the fire. Both men were 37 and married; each had three children. I was told who the arsonist was by more than one person, all of whom were indignant that state authorities hadn't made an arrest yet.

These events and a good many others show that there is more trauma in Sauk Centre than Sinclair Lewis permitted in his fictional town. In the eight or nine years we read about, there is only one tragedy—the death of a supporting character's wife and child by typhoid. (It doesn't do much to unite the town, either.) There is one major scandal: an appealing young teacher goes to a square dance with the town oaf, behaves innocently and bravely while her escort gets drunk and boorish, and gets the man home. She subsequently is fired, while the oaf is exonerated. There are a couple of flirtations involving Carol. There is one adultery, that of her husband with Dave Dyer's wife. So much for a decade of action in Gopher Prairie.

Heartache is no stranger in town

In the same length of time, people living in and around Sauk Centre have not been nearly so lucky. In addition to the aforementioned deaths by fire and suicide, there has been a murder (a farmer shot his wife and then himself) and more than a dozen teenagers have died in car crashes; six were killed all at once in a single accident, with a strong supposition that they had been drinking.

During my stay in town, I became interested in several young women who were the type you might expect to find as seniors in the high school sorority, a personable group from affluent families. One of them had been raped during her freshman year. Another, as a

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sophomore, had a child out of wedlock, which was put up for adoption. Another was emotionally disturbed, for a time, after her brother got drunk and vandalized a public building. There was nothing secret about any of this, and I was told that the town was tenderly supportive of all three girls. Is this to say that Sauk Centre is broader-minded, more willing to understand and take care of its own, than the stereotypical small town? Or is it another change in the way things are, overall? Or is it the kind of thing that Lewis simply chose to leave out of *Main Street*?

Business is important to Sauk Centre but, unlike Gopher Prairie's naive boosters, the modern townsfolk realize that theirs will not become a major city. The main contributors to the local economy, in addition to dairy products and tourism, are St. Michael's Hospital and Nursing Home (about 200 employees), the public school system (170), Fingerhut, a mailing firm (122) and the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Sauk Centre (around 100), which is a minimum-security juvenile detention center.

I can't guess how Gopher Prairie would have liked being the location of the last named. According to Dennis Rykken, one of the facility's administrators, Sauk Centre's attitude is pragmatic. "When one of our kids decides to run," he said, "the first thing he does is pick up a car. Although we probably cost the town 15 or 20 stolen cars a year, we put over a million dollars a year into the economy." Dennis is a career man in the prison system who moved to Sauk Centre 12 years ago, likes it and serves on the town council.

It was with Dennis, who cares about the subject, that I discussed race in Sauk Centre. There is an evident and growing Asian component in town today, which includes some Vietnamese families brought in by the churches. There are no black families, but one couple—the man works at the facility, incidentally—has adopted five black children. Asian children are more commonly adopted: Dennis himself has adopted a Korean son and daughter. I asked whether there had been any problems and he laughed. "Just once," he said. "My daughter was in first grade and there was a snowball fight. Some kid called her a 'dumb Chinese' and she yelled back, 'I'm not Chinese, I'm Korean. You dumb Caucasian!' "

Al Tingley works on his impersonation of evangelist Elmer Gantry, one of Lewis' best-known characters.

Lewis is gone but not forgotten

Whatever else makes Sauk Centre unique, it has been made so in one set of particulars as a legacy of the man who proclaimed it typical. It is only fitting, therefore, that the town has a museum called the Sinclair Lewis Interpretive Center, which also houses the Chamber of Commerce. From the Interpretive Center, you drive north down Original Main Street to its intersection with Sinclair Lewis Avenue. Here you may turn west to go to the author's boyhood home, east to visit the author's grave at Greenwood Cemetery. Or, you may stop off at the Palmer House—called the Minniemashie House in *Main Street*—which is the restored hotel. The beer comes in chilled mugs, but if you can resist that and go straight on by, you will come, in about three blocks, to Sinclair Lewis Park.

There are three ways of taking the author's pervasive presence. The first and most common goes like this: "I guess people were pretty mad about what he said back then, but nobody cares much now. As for trying to make a big deal out of him, I get tired of it."

A second, much smaller faction in town is seriously proud of Lewis. They read him. They know that his nickname was Red. They know that his father was, like Will Kennicott, a country doctor and that his stepmother founded the local Gradatim Club, a women's literary and social group that was called the Thanatopsis Club in *Main Street*. They know where the various members of his family went. They know about his two marriages, his terrible temper, his acid tongue, his churlishness and his shocking refusal of a Pulitzer Prize in 1926. They repeat the affectionate legends. ("The only chore he liked as a boy was working up firewood, because he could put his book on the sawbuck and read while he sawed.") They dispute the notion that he was a misfit who was the brunt of every joke. To them the town is honored by the association, and in this spirit money was raised for a fine bronze bust of the author, which is on display at the Center.

There is some overlap and exchange between this group and a third, the practical promoters who have

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found in Lewis something that might have vastly pleased his mordant streak: an opportunity for Sauk Centre to feed off the hand that slapped it. The chief annual production of the alliance between the commemorators and the feeders—it is possible to be a little of each—is an intermittent four-day carnival in the second week of July called Sinclair Lewis Days.

Things started out this year on Wednesday evening with the junior and senior high school bands giving a joint concert in the band shell at Sinclair Lewis Park. Featured were selections from Handel, Offenbach and *The Music Man*, and a light rain. The next evening at a much larger event Miss Sauk Centre was chosen. Admission to the annual pageant was $3 with a Sinclair Lewis Button, $5 without, and the elementary school auditorium where it was held was jammed with spectators. We gazed on beauty and innocence, suitably costumed for the occasion: evening gowns only, no bathing suits. We watched each of the ten contestants perform in some way and saw their poise tested in interviews. We listened to the emcee sing, watched him ogle and caper.

My own most urgent applause was for a young woman who played a nifty sax solo, though she didn't win anything, and a lovely, tall entry who was the evening-gown winner. Kathy Uhlenkamp, petite and blonde, sponsored by the J.C. Penney store, was a solid popular choice. She is a serious and accomplished flutist and handles herself well. She'll make a good queen.

The new queen's first official appearance occurred on Sunday when she, her first and second princesses and the other contestants, riding in open convertibles, were among the 132 units in the Sinclair Lewis Days Parade. The winning float was a painted tableau of Lewis' hometown. Second prize went to a model of a 100th-anniversary birthday cake that was big enough to hide the truck it rode on. There was a papier-mâché head of Lewis, mounted on a draped shopping cart and accompanied by people dressed as Carol Kennicott, Martin Arrowsmith and Elmer Gantry, three of Lewis' best-known characters. Al Tingley preached along the entire parade route as the incarnation of Elmer Gantry, the target of Lewis' novel about evangelism. In his clerical robes, he dashed back and forth across the street, exhorting, stopping frequently to shout, "The Lord hates a sinner—and there's one *there*!" at which he'd point indignantly at an acquaintance in the crowd.

Tingley is a wiry man with an acerbic wit and lots of energy. I liked his humor. It's small-town, if you wish, but that doesn't mean dumb. He was, uncharacteristically, on the losing end of a nice exchange that I witnessed late one night. A National Guard unit was passing through Sauk Centre, stopping off to camp at the fairground on its way to summer maneuvers. Al and I were standing outside the Palmer House. A young Guard corporal stopped to ask which of the local bars he should head for. Al offered descriptions of several, to which the corporal listened respectfully, then said "Thanks." As he went off, Al called after him, "The girls in this town are all virgins." The guardsman stopped, turned his head and smiled. "That's all right," he said. "So are we."

By the time the parade was over, the mood in Sauk Centre was tired and happy. My own mood was curious. I had been in and out of the town for no more than ten or 12 days, but the place was already starting to make some kind of claim on me. I was proud that our Streeters had been Class A Baseball Champs in 1982. I wanted that arsonist arrested—and not long after I left town she was. I hoped the Korean girl would hit the Caucasian with at least one good snowball. I knew which side I was on in the stand-off between town and teachers. I was willing to sign on, too, with those who were proud of Sinclair Lewis.

I had started to care. That is the magic of small-town life, of course. You give up some privacy and accept some vulnerability to the pressure of other peoples' opinions, in exchange for heightened identity and the protection that comes from caring and being cared about. But someone more knowledgeable about it than I made the case for Sauk Centre in particular. In 1931, a decidedly mellowed Harry Sinclair Lewis reminisced fondly about his town and wrote some lines that more people there could quote, I think, than any of his others: "It was a good time, a good place and a good preparation for life."

Cars cruise down Main Street in the town that Lewis remembered with real affection as he grew older.

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Julia Morgan, first woman architect to graduate from Ecole des Beaux-Arts, sits in Paris kitchen, c. 1900.

By Lynne Olson

A tycoon's home was his petite architect's castle

But who was *the master builder of William Randolph Hearst's dream house? Bit by bit, elusive Julia Morgan is being revealed*

With commanding view of the Pacific, Hearst's San Simeon hilltop complex was Julia's greatest challenge.

The tourists file into the red-and-gilt movie theater, dazed and footsore. For 90 minutes they have tramped around the Hearst Castle at San Simeon on the central California coast, overwhelmed by its rococo splendors. Now it's time for a rest in what was once William Randolph Hearst's private theater—and a look back at San Simeon when it was a magnet for the famous, rich and powerful of the world. A film flickers on the screen: there's Marie Dressler clowning, Clark Gable mugging

Cathedral-like residence and adjacent guesthouses and Neptune Pool (right) were Hollywood playground.

and Charlie Chaplin cavorting on the tennis court. And there's Hearst himself, standing with a wisp of a woman who reacts to the camera by covering her bespectacled face with a handful of papers. The narrator identifies her as Hearst's secretary.

Hardly. She is Julia Morgan, the architect and master builder of San Simeon, who, under Hearst's watchful eye, transformed a barren hill overlooking the Pacific into the site of what may be the 20th century's most lavish and ostentatious residence (above). For nearly 20 years this teetotaling spinster, her hair tucked in a schoolmarmish bun, supervised virtually every detail of erecting and furnishing Hearst's 144-room pleasure park. Since 1958, when San Simeon was opened to the public, more than 17 million visitors have seen the flamboyant fruit of Morgan's labors.

For Julia Morgan, however, San Simeon was a startling incongruity in a brilliant 46-year career. The

first woman to graduate in architecture from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, she was one of San Francisco's most renowned and prolific architects. Starting in 1902, she designed close to 800 buildings throughout California and the West, most of them as understated and beautifully proportioned as San Simeon is extravagant and jumbled. Several, like the Berkeley City Club (right) and the YWCA of Oahu, have landmark status; two—San Simeon and the Asilomar Conference Center on the Monterey Peninsula—are California state monuments.

This drab, soft-spoken woman—who "looked like a nobody," according to a former employee—is regarded by some as America's most successful woman architect. "Who else has surpassed her?" asks architectural historian Sally Woodbridge. "No other woman has produced the volume of buildings that she did."

Why, then, have so few people ever heard of her? Because Morgan loathed personal publicity and did everything in her power to avoid celebrity. She shunned the press and refused to allow her name to be posted at construction sites. When she retired, she ordered all of her papers burned, believing that an architect should be like the usually anonymous medieval master builders who created Europe's vast monasteries, cathedrals and castles. In Morgan's view, a building should speak for itself.

She belongs with Cassatt and Wharton

When *Life* ran a story on San Simeon in 1957, it never mentioned Morgan's name. An irate art historian complained in a letter to the editor: "In American architecture she deserves at least as high a place as does Mary Cassatt in American painting, or Edith Wharton in American letters."

But Morgan is finally losing her aura of mystery, thanks to the dogged efforts of architectural historians like Sara Holmes Boutelle. For 11 years, she has been tracking down information for her biography of Julia. Her crusade to publicize the architect's achievements began when she toured San Simeon in 1974 and a guide mentioned that the castle had been designed by Julia Morgan "but didn't know any more about her. That got me started. I couldn't get Julia Morgan out of my head." With Boutelle's help, the Regional Oral History Office of the University of California's Bancroft Library recorded interviews with several of Morgan's friends, relatives and former employees. Some of them are quoted, with appreciation, in this article. Since then, the Morgan-Hearst correspondence from San Simeon, as well as a smattering of personal letters, have been given to California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo.

On one point, at least, there is no mystery: Julia

Members' lounge at the Berkeley City Club, completed in 1930, has decorative stained beams and girders.

City Club's East Court opens onto ground-floor loggia and hall. The club cost 37 cents a cubic foot to build.

In 1911, Morgan built Romanesque stucco-on-frame house in Berkeley for congressman and his bride-to-be.

In 1985, interior of the home above offers light, airy, inviting qualities typical of Morgan residences.

Morgan's success stemmed from talent and an obsession with her profession that virtually precluded any private life. Often working 14 hours a day, six days a week, she kept tight control of all aspects of her commissions—interviewing clients, sketching preliminary drawings, monitoring preparation of final working drawings and supervising construction.

Born on January 26, 1872, Julia enjoyed a comfortable childhood, thanks to her maternal grandfather, a millionaire cotton speculator. A small, frail child, iron-willed Julia rebelled against Victorian ideas of proper girlish behavior, preferring to cavort on her brothers' gymnastic equipment and swing from the rafters in the family stable.

In civil engineering, a minority of one

By 1890, she knew that she wanted to have a career. Escorted to and from classes by her elder brother, she entered the University of California at Berkeley—one of only about two dozen women students. She chose architecture as her field of study. Because there was no school of architecture there, Julia enrolled in the civil engineering course—its only female student—where she learned about the mechanics of building but little about design. Providentially, she met Bernard Maybeck during her senior year. One of the most creative architects San Francisco has produced, he was then a 32-year-old instructor in the university's drawing department. An eccentric who sported a waist-length beard and trousers that reached almost to his armpits, he was already working on the style of domestic architecture for which he became famous: houses of native redwood which would "climb the hill" on a "goat lot" and blend into the landscape.

Maybeck was so impressed by Julia that he became her mentor, inviting her to informal classes on architectural design that he conducted at his home. After receiving her engineering degree in 1894, she went to work for Maybeck, who encouraged her to further her training at his alma mater, the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. There was one hitch. The Ecole discouraged women from enrolling and had never admitted a foreign female. Arriving in Paris in 1896, Julia was told that the faculty "*ne voudrant pas encourager les jeunes filles*"—did not wish to encourage young ladies. She wrote that she intended to stay "just to show '*les jeunes filles*' are not discouraged." Supporting herself by working as a draftsman for a French architect, she passed the rigorous entrance examinations and was finally admitted to the school.

Despite harassment from fellow students who poured water on her head and pushed her off the ends of benches, she excelled. Writing to her cousin, she noted that one teacher "always seems astonished if I do any-

Julia displays catch at Wyntoon, Hearst's retreat in Northern California, 1933. Her face shows paralysis.

At San Simeon, Julia tempts Marianne, of Hearst's own menagerie, who roamed around like a movie star.

thing showing the least intelligence, '*Ah, mais, c'est intelligent,*' as though that was the last thing expected." In 1902, Julia Morgan was awarded a *Certificat d'étude* in architecture, the first given a woman.

At the age of 30, she returned to San Francisco to work for John Galen Howard, a brilliant New York architect who had been imported to direct an ambitious building program for the University of California. She helped design the elegantly classical Hearst Memorial Mining Building, donated by Phoebe Hearst in memory of her late husband, George, a roughhewn miner who had struck it rich. The Hearsts' son, William Randolph, was a budding newspaper magnate; he financed an 8,000-seat Greek theater on the campus, which Morgan designed to resemble the theater at Epidaurus.

Mrs. Hearst, a philanthropist devoted to women's causes, was impressed by the independent Julia Morgan. The two had first met in Paris, where she had offered to finance Julia's education at the Ecole—an offer that was declined. In San Francisco, Mrs. Hearst took Julia under her wing and later commissioned her to remodel a family hunting lodge. Meanwhile, John Galen Howard was boasting to his colleagues about his achievement in capturing Julia, "the best and most talented designer, whom I have to pay almost nothing, as it is a woman." She left Howard in 1904 to open her own office in San Francisco.

Julia Morgan shunned the label "woman architect," but from the beginning was architect of choice for prominent women such as Phoebe Hearst and for the women's organizations to which they belonged. Her first major commission came from Mills College, a women's college in Oakland, which asked her to design a campanile. She created a gem of a bell tower in Mission Revival style. She later designed Mills' library, gymnasium and social hall.

The campanile, constructed of reinforced concrete, withstood San Francisco's devastating earthquake in 1906—a fact that may have helped her win the task of rebuilding the Fairmont Hotel, which the earthquake had reduced to a shell. Jane Armstrong, a local reporter, decided to check out the amazing news that a woman had been put in charge of the Fairmont renovation. Standing with Julia in the hotel's beautifully restored ivory, gold, gray and scarlet dining room, the newswoman assumed that the architect had done the interior decoration and gushed, "How you must have reveled in this chance to squeeze dry the loveliest tubes in the whole world of color." Smiling, Julia replied: "I don't think you understand just what my work here

Lynne Olson is a free-lance writer who lives in Los Angeles. She has published several articles on women's issues in Working Woman *magazine.*

In midlife, Hearst became king of his own castle. (He'd first asked Morgan to build rustic bungalows.)

has been. The decorative part was all done by a New York firm. . . . My work has all been structural."

It was the first—and last—interview that Julia Morgan is known to have given.

Her work on the Fairmont established her reputation, and from then on she had all of the commissions that she could handle. In the first dozen years of her practice, she and her staff, which numbered 16 architects at the height of her career, designed more than 300 homes, schools, churches, women's clubs and other small institutional buildings, most in the San Francisco Bay area.

Known as an architect who sublimated her own artistic ego to accommodate the needs and desires of her clients (she never rejected them because they had little money to spend), Morgan was neither interested in innovation for its own sake nor in developing a style readily identifiable as her own. Instead, she designed buildings "from the inside out"—concentrating on interiors that were practical, convenient and elegantly simple. The exteriors were understated, sober and carefully balanced. In the case of her residential commissions, which made up the bulk of her practice, "the object was first of all to build a home," said the late Walter Steilberg, her longtime structural engineer and a respected architect himself.

Eclectic in her choice of styles, willing to borrow from Gothic, Byzantine, Romanesque or any other period requested by a client, she usually added her own modifications. Often using the classicism of her Beaux-Arts training, she helped formulate a new form of architecture associated with Northern California's increasingly casual lifestyle: wood for both interiors and exteriors, a look of informality and a blending of the building with the landscape. Her houses generally had a light and airy outdoorsy feeling, with an abundance of windows, courtyards and open porches. The pleasure of occupying a Romanesque Morgan house (p. 63) for 30 years is described by former owner Constance Braver as "like living inside a work of art—the proportions are so classically comfortable."

Morgan was interested in structure—and in the use of structural materials as part of the design. In the Berkeley City Club, the soaring vaulted ceilings on the first floor are of unadorned concrete. The ornate club-hotel, Gothic and Romanesque in style, features cloister-style arcades that surround two interior courts (p. 62). She paid extraordinary attention to detail and had a passion for quality. When the Oakland YWCA was under construction, she personally inspected each of the thousands of tiny tiles which were to cover the building's exterior columns, discarding those with even the tiniest flaws. She demanded perfection from contractors and laborers alike, expecting top-quality materials and workmanship. Some contractors who hadn't worked with her before took one look at the demure lady, barely more than five feet tall, and dismissed her complaints about what they'd done and

Ziegfeld showgirl Marion Davies won Hearst's heart. When San Simeon was ready, she moved in as queen.

Cinderella House is one of three in the Bavarian style that Morgan built for forest wilderness of Wyntoon.

how they'd done it. They did that only once: she could rip out faulty work with her bare hands. Said an employee: "Big men used to quail in her presence."

Always immaculately dressed in a dark tailored suit, white blouse and ample hat, Morgan would climb 100-foot ladders and clamber out on scaffolding 13 stories above the ground to inspect construction. Occasionally she'd be so busy inspecting that she wouldn't watch where she was going and would fall to the floor below. One day a strong wind blew her three or four stories down off a scaffolding into a river. But the bruises and scars never deterred her from climbing up again. When flying was not yet commonplace, she hired a stunt pilot to take her up "to see what it was like," and later chartered a Lockheed Vega to fly her to her farflung construction sites.

She liked young people, and her office became known to fledgling architects as a wonderful, if difficult, training ground. Walter Steilberg recalled that after he graduated from architectural school, a prominent San Francisco architect told him to go see Julia Morgan for a job. "I hadn't even heard of Miss Morgan," Steilberg said. "I looked a little startled and he said, 'Don't fool yourself, young man. She's one of the best architects in this city.' "

"She was a perfectionist, and each job was a maximum effort," said Dorothy Wormser Coblentz, one of several women who worked as draftsmen for Morgan. "Nothing was left incomplete . . . nothing was left to chance. . . . The pressure was terrible." She would present a draftsman with an eight-inch sketch of a proposed building, just "a little scratch of something, and then you'd have to work from that. . . . You'd come to a place where you couldn't go further, but you couldn't try any other line of reasoning until she came back and gave you permission."

Morgan thought of her staff as her children and herself as the stern but loving matriarch. Satisfied with only a few hours of sleep a night and sometimes only a candy bar for dinner, she felt that her employees should be as consumed with work as she was and seemed unable to understand why they might want a private life. Never interested in money, she divided the profits among the staff, keeping only enough to pay for her limited personal expenses and office overhead. "Her total earnings were seldom over $10,000 a year, and I don't think any year she made as much as $15,000," said her late nephew, Morgan North.

Julia's true affection for children probably helped during her 30-year collaboration with William Randolph Hearst—a man whose willful behavior often tested her patience. When Hearst began work on San Simeon, he was the notorious lord of a publishing empire encompassing six magazines and 13 newspapers. The hallmarks of his newspapers were scandal, crime, sensation, exaggeration and downright fabrication. He was anathema to many (the *North American Review* called him "a blazing disgrace to the craft"), but increasingly rich and powerful. Hearst had gone into journalism at 22, after expulsion from Harvard for presenting chamber pots—engraved with their names—to his instructors. After making his first newspaper, the failing San Francisco *Examiner*, a success, he performed the same feat with the New York *Journal*.

Morgan at Beaux-Arts, Hearst at war

As a tactic in his fierce circulation war with Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World*, Hearst in the 1890s called for war with Spain over its occupation of Cuba. In a famous exchange of telegrams, artist Frederic Remington, whom Hearst had sent to Cuba, wired: "Everything is quiet. There is no trouble here. There will be no war. I wish to return." Hearst wired back: "Please remain. You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war." Goaded by the *Journal*'s inflammatory coverage of the sinking of the U.S. battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor, Congress declared war against Spain in 1898—the year that Julia Morgan entered the Beaux-Arts.

Exulting in his journalistic influence, Hearst decided that he wanted political power as well, but except for two terms as Congressman from New York, he was doomed to disappointment. Foiled in his 1904 bid for the Democratic Presidential nomination (the year Morgan opened her office), he turned to his other pas-

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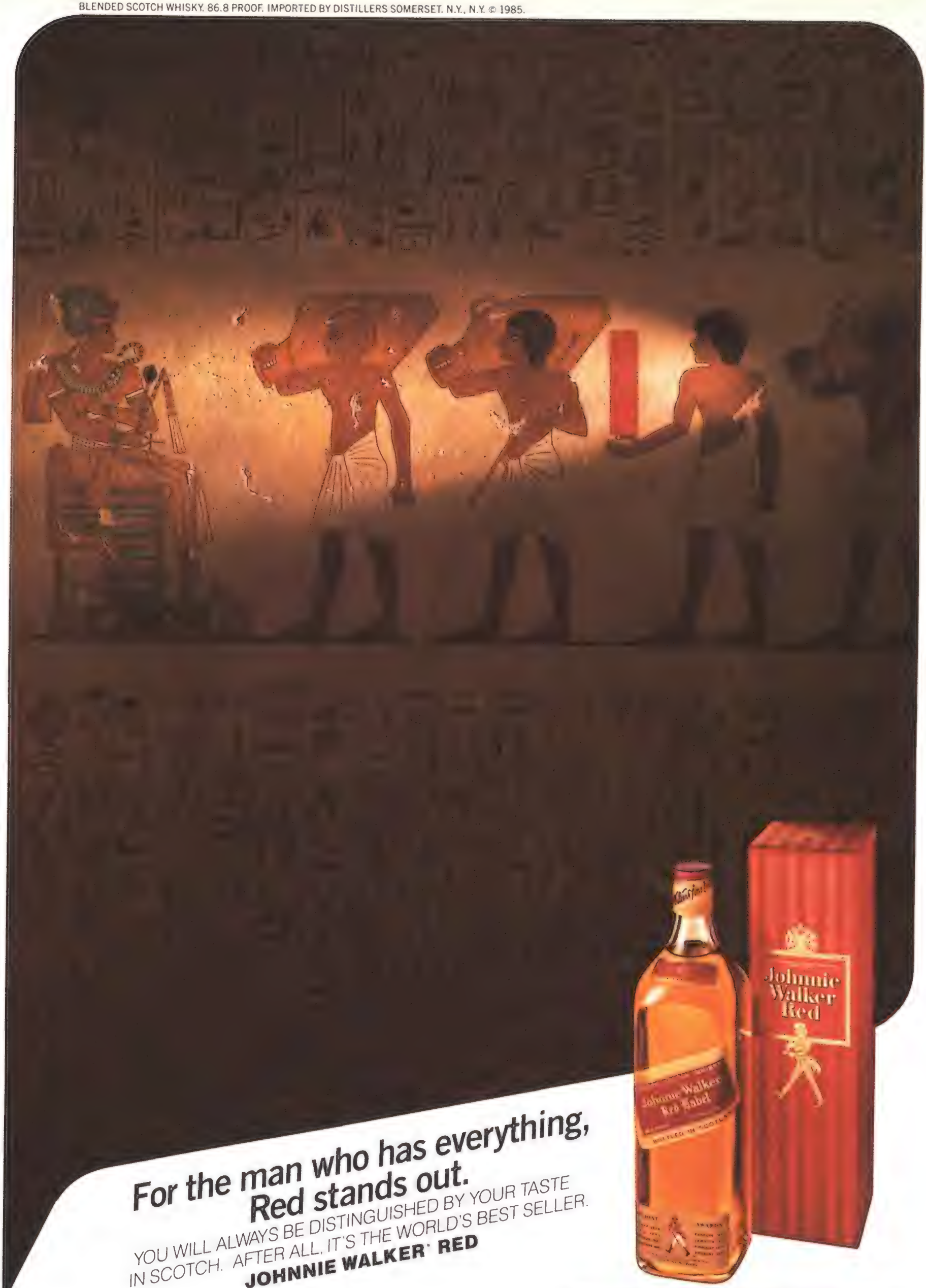

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sions—architecture, art collecting and Marion Davies. Hearst met Davies, a 1917 Ziegfeld Follies showgirl, promptly fell in love with her and decided to make her a movie star. His wife refused to divorce him, but he lived with Marion Davies, the true mistress of San Simeon, until his death in 1951.

In 1919 Hearst, by then a publishing tycoon, told Julia Morgan that he wanted her to build a few bungalows on his 275,000-acre ranch at San Simeon, where he and his family camped every summer. He had come across a style he rather liked, a "Jappo-Swisso bungalow." They both laughed at the absurd name, little dreaming of the mammoth undertaking and monumental headaches that lay ahead.

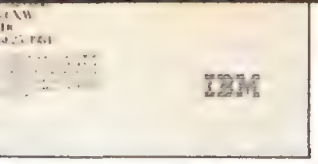
Hearst insisted that he wanted simple, rustic structures with plaster walls and wooden ceilings. Morgan drew up set after set of plans; Hearst constantly altered them as he moved toward the florid, unrestrained style that would be San Simeon's hallmark. What emerged were drawings for a twin-tower castle which dominated the crest of the hill, and three guesthouses which cascaded down the hillside, all surrounded by terraced gardens and groves of trees. The cost of construction, from 1919 to 1942, totaled $4.7 million.

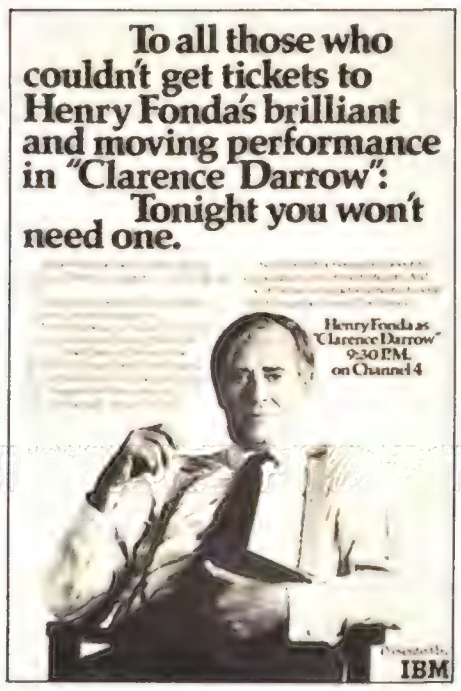
An obsessive international art collector over the years, Hearst had amassed an amazing array of paintings, tapestries, carpets, beds, tables, secretaries, church statuary, mantels, columns, carved doors, choir stalls, window grilles, sarcophagi, wellheads—even stairways and ceilings. "Every time Willie feels badly, he goes out and buys something," his mother once observed. Morgan soon realized that Hearst wanted San Simeon to be not only a personal retreat, but a museum for his hoard of treasures, which by then had overrun several warehouses. Hers was the task of integrating these disparate elements into a unified whole.

Even with Hearst's original idea of simple bungalows, construction would have been arduous. The serpentine road climbing 1,600 feet from the foot of a chaparral-covered hill to San Simeon, a road that makes tourists uneasy even today, was only a dirt path in 1919 and was frequently flooded by rainstorms. At first, building materials were carried up the hill by horse and wagon, later by early-model Mack trucks that groaned their way to the summit at one mile an hour. Docks at the nearby Pacific shore were rebuilt for steamers that brought supplies from San Francisco; a camp was constructed at the base of the hill for workers. From the beginning, Julia Morgan was in charge of every aspect of construction.

San Simeon's guesthouses, each a mansion in its own right, were built first. They were relatively simple: red tile roofs and white walls, with intricate grillwork and handpainted tiles. But Casa Grande, atop the summit, was a cathedral-like edifice made of reinforced concrete to withstand the strongest earthquakes, a wild mix of styles jammed with art treasures from many periods. Nor was the castle planned functionally; it grew to satisfy Hearst's changing fancies and "didn't give Miss Morgan and me a real chance to use her real talent as a planner," complained Steilberg. "She was like a man playing the piano backwards."

From the beginning, Julia was bombarded with detailed instructions, suggestions and admonitions from Hearst, who was eager to move in as soon as possible. Yet he repeatedly changed his mind about what he wanted, often after work based on the original designs had been completed. Once, according to Steil-

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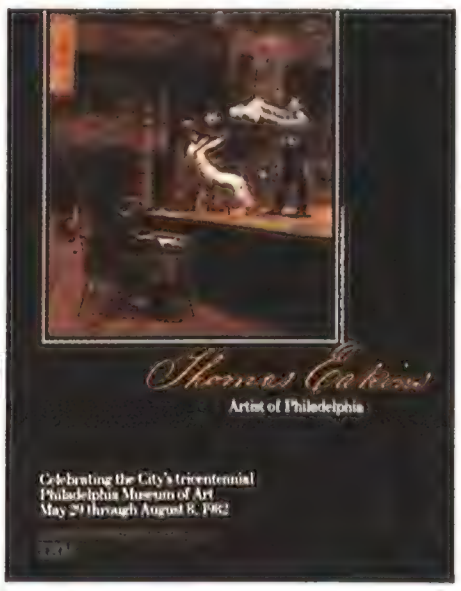

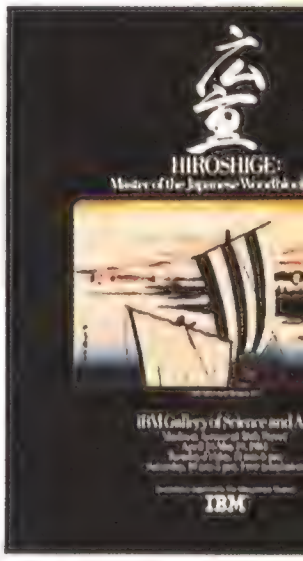

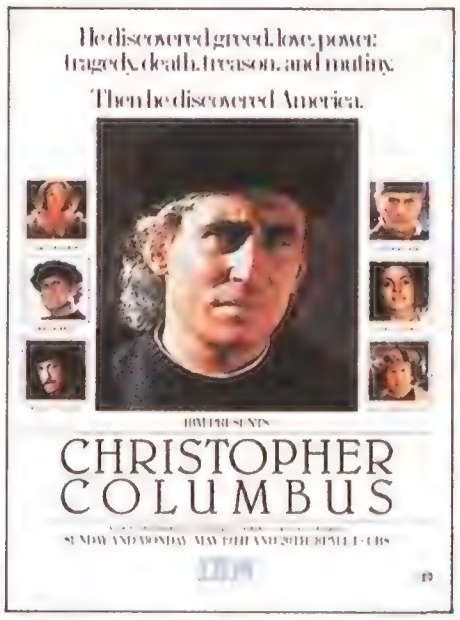
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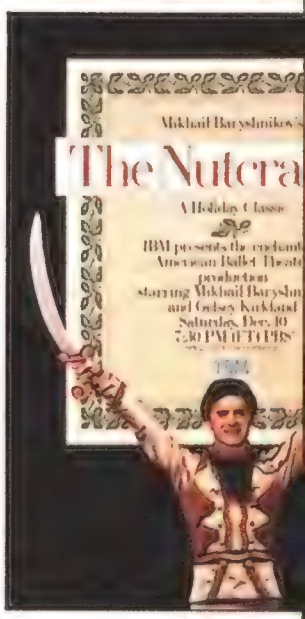

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berg, Hearst was inspecting one of the guesthouses and decided, on a whim, to have a fireplace moved to another spot in the room. Six months later, he decided the move had been a mistake. He ordered the fireplace rebuilt in its original location. The workers, many of them top craftsmen in their fields, were infuriated, Steilberg said. "Some of them told me, 'I can't stand that, doing the best I can on something, and then having someone just come and tear it down because he hasn't given it thought.' "

Even as he made his changes, Hearst—astonishingly—complained to Julia about slow construction and high costs. She would sometimes lose patience and let him know, in her mild way, that building his dream house was far from an easy task. "The shortage of every kind of material and of workmen out here is incredible, from draughtsmen to window glass inclusive," she wrote him in April 1920. "I had to take one of the modelers up to San Simeon this week and convince him that it was a 'lovely place' and then have him telephone . . . that I was veracious, before the cast-cement crew would agree to go up." Workmen imported from San Francisco often took one look at the isolated construction site and left, occasionally without unpacking, because "they didn't like feeling so far away from things," she added. They also didn't like the lack of a paycheck. Hearst was notoriously slow in paying his bills and, said Morgan North, Aunt Julia "suffered the tortures of the damned" in staving off workmen and contractors who hadn't been paid.

Morgan maintained her thriving San Francisco practice while supervising construction at San Simeon. Several times a month, she traveled down on the night train and spent a day or two at the castle. During her visits, Hearst paid little attention to anyone or anything else. In a little wooden shack in Casa Grande's courtyard, which served as her office, the pair conferred for hours. And at dinner in the splendid 67-foot-long Refectory, Hearst would ignore the world-famous celebrities around him and speak only to Julia, sometimes sketching designs on his paper napkin.

An egregious error ends in orchids

In 1928, Morgan underwent an operation for a chronically infected ear, which ended with the complete removal of her inner ear and permanent impairment of her equilibrium. Even worse, the surgeon accidentally severed a facial nerve, giving Julia's face the paralyzed look of a stroke victim. She felt as sorry for the doctor as he felt sorry about his mistake, and every year sent his wife orchids to ease his guilt. Sometimes she delivered the flowers herself.

Morgan didn't let her physical problems slow her down. Besides her work for other clients, she designed several more structures for Hearst, including the *Examiner* building in Los Angeles and three Bavarian-style cottages at Wyntoon (p. 66), Hearst's 67,000-acre estate in Northern California. (He and Marion Davies took refuge in Wyntoon's forest wilderness from 1942 through 1944 as an economy measure, but also to escape the possibility of being shelled at San Simeon by Japanese submarines off the Pacific coast.)

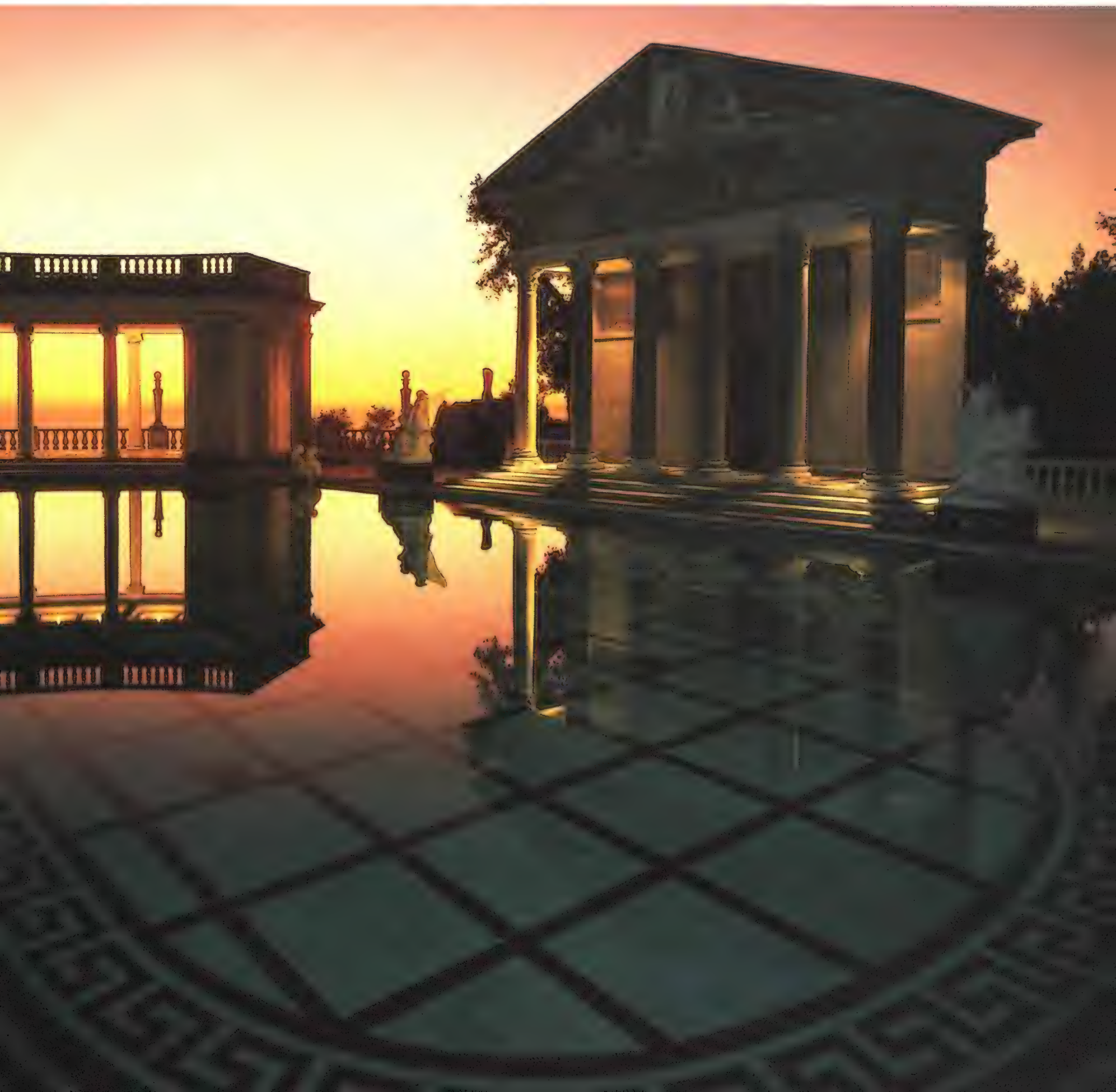
Julia still clambered over scaffolding, though often

Liquid jewel of San Simeon is Neptune Pool with Greco-Roman temple facade. Hearst nearly ruined it.

on her hands and knees because of her faulty balance. She jokingly spoke of the problems of walking down the street and trying to pass a drunk who was having balance troubles, too. But she *was* sensitive about her facial paralysis, refusing to go to dinner at San Simeon on the grounds that "an architect should never appear asymmetrical."

During World War II, Julia, then in her 70s, began to phase out her practice. She later replaced architecture with travel and roamed Europe. But her mind was starting to fail: she got lost on foreign jaunts and searches had to be organized (a major problem was that she wouldn't ask for help in finding her way). She died in 1957 at the age of 85, just six years after Hearst. She wanted no funeral and had told her nephew, "Please give me a quick tuck-in with my own." At her death she was penniless. Her legacy: the buildings she had designed.

He wanted to convert temple to a bath house. Morgan saved it by putting dressing rooms under a terrace.



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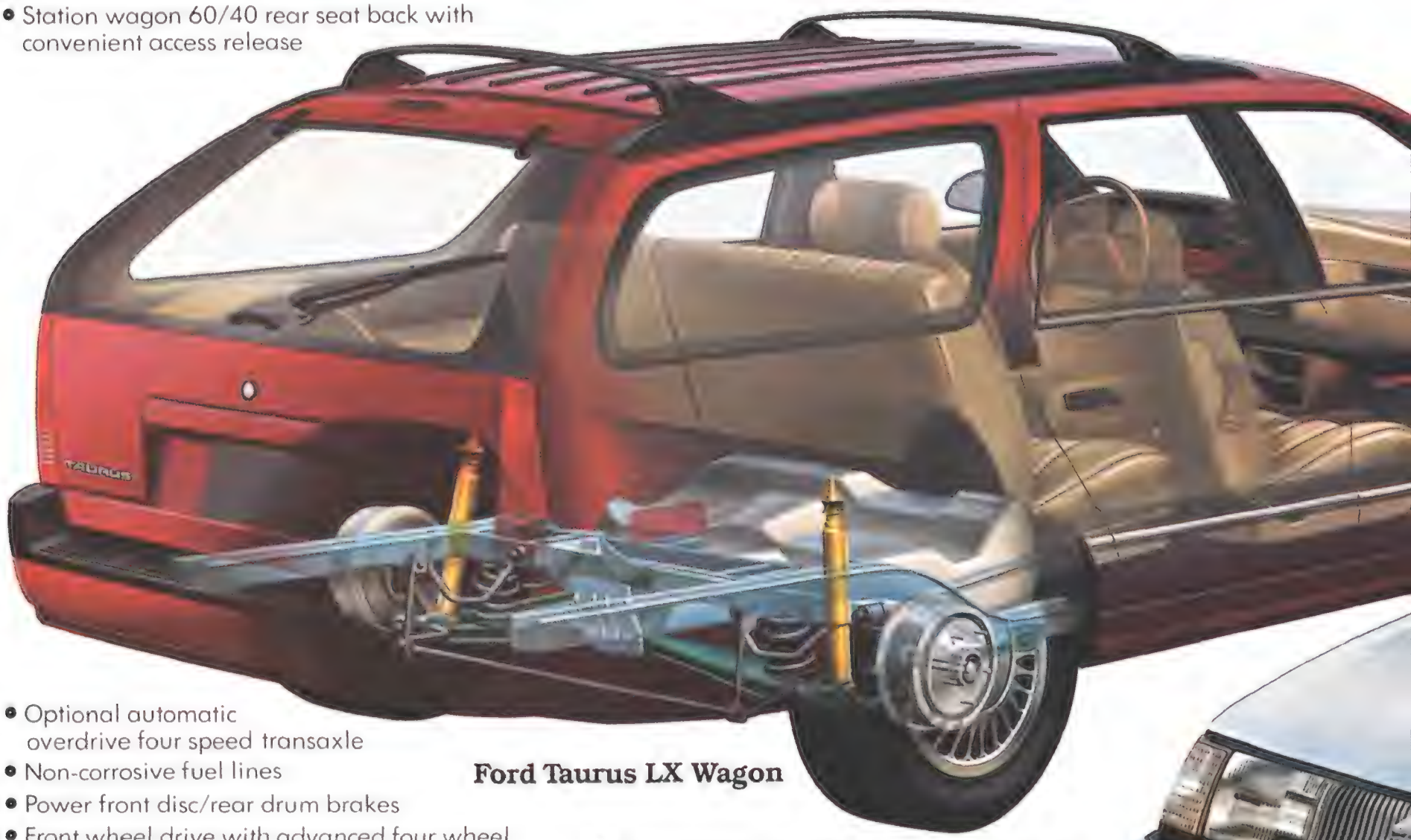

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Wally Byam designed his teardrop-shaped camper in 1932 to "move down the road like a stream of air."

Precision parking squeezed 3,965 trailers into 140 acres for a Grand Rally at Lake Placid last summer.

By Doug Stewart

To Airstreamers, a nomad's life is the good life

For many retirees, buying a 'silver blimp' is the start of a new adventure, as organized and hectic as the careers they left behind

I'm standing in front of a diner on Route 1 in Rowley, Massachusetts, waiting for a convoy of travel trailers to pick me up. As I squint into the haze to the north, a silver blimp looms into view at the top of a distant rise in the highway. Immediately, the headlights of the car pulling it flash once, then flash again. The rig is still more than a half-mile away—the driver can't possibly make me out—but already he's signaling me to prepare for boarding.

When I hop in, caravan leader Howard Knight reaches for the microphone of his CB radio to update the rest of the advance group out of sight behind us (the parking committee, the water committee and the nurse). "All right, one more time, Concrete—do you have ears? This is Silver Knight. I just picked up the reporter." His wife, Carolyn, sitting between us, records the exact mileage of our rendezvous in a logbook on her lap.

The tightly organized procession I've just joined is a summer caravan organized by the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (WBCCI). The club is named after the late founder of the Airstream Trailer Company, and every one of its members owns an Airstream. These vehicles are the crème de la crème of travel trailers—shiny aluminum eggs covered with rivets and stuffed with all the conveniences of a well-appointed condo. The top-of-the-line model sells for about $46,000, lots of money for something to camp in.

It was 50 years ago, in January 1936, that Wally Byam unveiled the Airstream Clipper, the first of the line to take on the now familiar Airstream shape. As its streamlined profile suggests, the Clipper was designed to move, not support patio awnings, and Airstreamers over the years have tended to move in flocks. Six out of ten owners join the club, and each year many of its members take part in roughly 1,500 rallies, cara-

Color photographs by Marcus Halevi

Pet-show contestants at last summer's rally shared trailers with their entries—except for one, a pony.

Gypsies but not loners, many WBCCI members enjoy social life of Airstreaming more than the sightseeing.

Home Ec teacher Sally Magalski (far right) coached fashion show contestants in modeling turns, postures.

vans and a variety of other trailer-related activities.

Their trademark is the meticulously arranged caravan camp, with hundreds and sometimes thousands of trailers parked in geometric patterns. Airstream encampments have turned up outside the Taj Mahal, the Great Pyramid at Giza and the Kremlin. This past September a caravan of Airstream trailers even rolled through a province in China, a first for American recreational vehicles.

To me, Airstreamers have always been romantic adventurers. When I was growing up, my family pulled a succession of cheap boxy trailers around the United States and Europe. In the various campsites where we stayed, the Airstreamers were invariably silver-haired couples with four-wheel-drive trucks sporting oversize radio antennas and extra water tanks. One day on the outskirts of Istanbul, I watched as part of the now-mythic Airstream Round-the-World Caravan of 1963-64 zoomed past. The image still lingers in my mind.

The typical Airstream caravan, however, is not an exercise in high adventure. Most, like the New England caravan I joined, are three-week, 50-trailer sightseeing trips right here in the United States. My host, Howard Knight, may not have to worry about Afghan bandits or African coups d'état, but he does have plenty to keep him busy.

Knight is a short, round-faced man who takes his leadership role seriously. The dashboard of his truck-camper is crowded with an assortment of gear: two stick-on digital clocks, two compasses, an altimeter, a clip-on pad of paper. Everywhere are maps—maps on the dashboard, maps in the door pockets, maps stuffed in milk crates in the backseat. Cruising through an intersection on Route 1, Knight picks up the CB again to tell the others to expect a red light. These folks don't mosey down the road, I realize. They advance.

"The next group will be here in about 20 minutes," Knight tells me at the day's destination, an empty fairground. "They'll all come flying in after that." Unlike funeral corteges, Airstream caravans never travel convoy-style. Convoys are too hard to pass. The rule of thumb is: if you can read the large red ID number on the trailer in front of you, you're tailgating.

After Knight unhitches his trailer, he rummages in the back of his camper and pulls out a set of flags, a doormat and a folding table for sightseeing brochures. He rummages some more and pulls out a bulletin board with committee assignments and rules for one-base baseball ("Walk, do not run, to first base"). He props the bulletin board up over his trailer hitch.

The parking committee arrives. Despite the club's reputation for precision parking, the committee's

Doug Stewart, who lives in Newbury, Massachusetts, wrote about visual thinking in the August issue.

five members present a decidedly non-Prussian appearance. Most of them are short, pot-bellied and rumpled. All appear to be over 70. Walt Keeler, a cheerful one-time mayor of Wichita, solemnly paces off the field, taking wide, bent-kneed strides, eyes on the ground. Every six paces he stops, and a man following close behind sprays a dab of silver paint on the grass. "Lemme tell you something," calls out one committeeman, taller, thinner and crankier than the rest. "You guys are not square here." "Well, Virgil, the road's not square," Walt replies and keeps pacing.

To Airstreamers, 50 trailers constitute an intimate gathering. With a whole fairground to play with, there's room to be a little sloppy. Almost 80 times as many trailers converged when the club held its 28th International Grand Rally in Lake Placid, New York, last summer, and nothing was left to chance. The 3,965 aluminum orbs assumed rally formation with knife-edge precision (pp. 74-75). From two miles away, the campground resembled a sea of mercury flooding the valley below the Olympic ski jump. Up close, it was a city that had rolled into town virtually overnight.

"We're kind of orderly people"

I asked Jack Reifschneider, the man in charge of coordinating long-distance U.S. caravans for the club, why Airstreamers arrange themselves so neatly. "We're kind of orderly people," he said. "We're proud of our trailers, and we're proud of our club. We don't want communities to think we're a bunch of bums coming through. We weren't before we retired, you know." Reifschneider admitted some people view Airstreams as just another breed of mobile home, cheap houses on wheels that bring down property values wherever they come to rest. During the Lake Placid rally, which tripled the town's population, an angry letter to a local newspaper complained that "zoning in this community has broken down completely. The entire village is plastered with ugly silver trailers. They're like locusts."

No cloud of locusts was ever this well organized, however. Volunteer committees handled everything: pet shows, pancakes, propane, pork roasts, first aid, fashion shows, teen queens and tractor tows. At the Olympic Center in town, site of most of the rally's activities, I sat in on an amplified question-and-answer session in the main auditorium. ("Always try to leave some space between the items in your refrigerator," an expert intones from the stage. "The cold air needs to be able to circulate.") Several hundred rallygoers listened attentively. In a darkened high school auditorium across the street, Airstreamers took turns showing slides of their trips. Awards would be handed out later.

In the street outside, stoop-shouldered men in ersatz

Mock "mailbox" is catchall for Art and Peg Hacking's many messages (they're on the propane committee).

With satellite dish, Daniel and Arlyn Merrill display flags: Texas, Old Glory and one for midshipman son.

Garden of painted wooden tulips makes instant front yard for this Airstream, wherever it may roll.

A culture of affluent nomads

Byam listed caravans he had led on front of his trailer. Adventures also served to torture-test new models.

Byam's Airstream No. 1 stands at head of caravan as Airstreamers visit French abbey, Mont-Saint-Michel.

This 1956 entourage spent six months in Europe; others have been to the Kremlin and the Taj Mahal.

pith helmets, WBCCI POLICE inscribed on the brims, directed traffic. The rally's police chief, Jim Creel, said he had 82 volunteers under his command. He reckoned their average age was 70. "We have retired chiefs of police from all around the country," he told me, "and a few active ones. The chief of inspectors of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is here." What was he doing? I asked. "He's out directing traffic on the corner." At the campground one evening, as I watched an elderly volunteer road crew climb out of a truck and quietly shovel sand into ruts, I had a weird sensation of having chanced upon an addendum to *Gulliver's Travels*: a lost island of senior citizens.

Rally-hopping in a hand-polished antique

You don't have to wait until you retire to start Airstreaming, but it helps. Many Airstreamers, like early retiree Stan Baston and his wife, Florence, of Neptune, New Jersey, began rally-hopping while still in their mid-50s. The Bastons own an antique Airstream, a 22-foot, hand-polished beauty built in 1956 (although some people might say that admiring one Airstream's appearance over another's is splitting hairs).

Stan is a meticulous individual and he takes naturally to Airstreaming. He showed me a worn logbook with crumbling pages. "Every mile this trailer's ever moved, we've logged it," he said. The Bastons' car, like their trailer, is a lovingly maintained relic, a 1967 Dodge Polara with its original upholstery and maroon paint job.

Baston pointed out that Airstream owners as a rule are people who have done well in their fields and thus are accustomed to organized activity. "All my life, I've lived under a great deal of pressure, and so have many of the people here. So we're almost continuing, subconsciously, to live that type of life. Look at all these meetings I'm going to." He showed me a list several pages long, much of which he'd already marked up with color-coded pens.

Airstreamers do indeed love meetings. A ubiquitous sight at the Lake Placid campground were white-haired couples in Windbreakers and sensible shoes stepping carefully between trailer rows on their way to some gathering nearby, each carrying a folding chair and an empty coffee mug. Socializing, not sightseeing, seemed to be the rally's raison d'être.

At a shuttle-bus stop one morning, I struck up a conversation with an unusually young-looking couple, Bernie and Jane Heidkamp of Fort Lauderdale. Bernie, like Stan Baston, is a recent retiree, and he and his wife are enthusiastic new club members. "Trying to keep up with these people is unbelievable," said Jane, a blond, well-coiffed 49-year-old. "They're 65 and 70, and their stamina is amazing." Bernie agreed: "They sure keep you active." With the zeal of a fresh convert, Bernie was wearing a blue beret, the official club headgear. He had just attended a wood-carving class for the first time in his life. I asked him what he'd carved. "It was a swan, I guess," he said, grinning sheepishly.

The youngest Airstream owners I met at the rally were Alan and Debra Kenney. Alan, who restores old buildings in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, is 35. Debra, director of a preschool, is 25. "People keep asking me if I came here with my grandparents," she told me. Alan became a full-timer straight out of college, living in an old 30-footer while traveling around the Southeast looking for teaching jobs. It was a way to avoid paying rent, he explained, and it gave him tremendous job flexibility. "When we first started dating and he showed me where his trailer was, I thought, what is *this*?" said Debra.

Alan was smitten by the romance of Airstreaming early in life. He can recall poring over an article about Airstreams in a 1957 issue of *National Geographic*. He was seven at the time. "I cut out all the pictures and made up a new story, putting in 'Alan' and 'David,' my twin brother's name, in place of the other people's names. I still have it."

The article in question was a story about the first Airstream caravan to visit Europe. Leader of the expedition was the intrepid Wally Byam himself, driving a chrome-bedecked Cadillac and pulling Airstream No. 1. Accounts of Wally Byam's caravans have probably sold more trailers than all the company's brochures and magazine ads combined, and Byam undoubtedly knew it. Throughout his life, he preached the idea of trailers as the embodiment of adventure on wheels. His rhapsodies on trailer travel were corny but impassioned. "I bequeath this creed . . ." he wrote before his death in 1962, "to lead caravans wherever the four winds blow . . . over twinkling boulevards, across trackless deserts . . . to the traveled and untraveled corners of the earth."

Byam began with do-it-yourself plans

Wally Byam was born in Oregon on the Fourth of July in 1896. The story goes that he learned caravanning as a boy, hauling freight by 16-mule team with his grandfather. In Los Angeles in the 1920s, after a stint as an advertising copywriter, he began publishing do-it-yourself stories for the amateur handyman audience. One piece, describing a shelter he'd built to fit on a Model A Ford chassis, brought in a stream of requests for custom orders; by 1930 he had abandoned publishing for the backyard trailer-building business.

Byam's early "torpedo trailers" were teardrop-shaped to cut down on wind resistance. With the Air-

Oscar Payne, 91, and wife Etta, 83, of Thermopolis, Wyoming, were eldest members of first China caravan.

stream Clipper in 1936, Byam arrived at the shape that Airstreamers have since come to know and love. The design was revolutionary: it was aerodynamically faired from end to end, it was built with curved, unpainted aluminum panels like a wingless airplane and it featured such luxuries as cedar-lined closets and experimental dry-ice air conditioning. In the depths of the Depression, the Clipper sold for $1,200, three times the price of the company's older, boxier models.

The travel-trailer industry shrank during the war years, then exploded in the late '50s. Many of the trailers built, however, were barely fit for travel. Triple-deckers and 65-footers with helicopter pads on top became a status symbol. For the hoi polloi, permanent slums of cheaply built box trailers on cinder blocks appeared on the edges of cities, a stopgap response to the postwar housing shortage. Wally Byam, meanwhile, stuck to the basic Airstream concept: sturdy, lightweight travel trailers that moved "like a stream of air."

Byam believed in torture-testing his products and he would frequently head for Mexico to break in his new designs. Some of his customers began joining him on his trips, and by the early '50s he and his wife, Stella, found themselves leading informal safaris of trailers down into Central America. The caravans grew in length—50 trailers, then 100, then 200. Order was needed and caravanners would volunteer for various tasks: postmaster, police chief, keeper of the kitty, official greeter. To keep caravan size manageable, an Airstream-only rule was invoked.

In 1955, Byam led an army of 500 trailers to Mexico. When the first trailer was 200 miles into foreign territory, those at the tail end were still crossing the border at a rate of three a minute. The roads soon began to deteriorate. At one point heavy rains had washed out a bridge. A road crew nailed together a replacement, and the five-mile parade of trailers began to roll across. "It was quite a sight," Byam wrote later, "the aluminum trailer bodies glowing dully in the lantern light, the threatening roar of the still-raging waters below and the protest of the pilings as each outfit edged out on the rickety stage." In situations like these, the locals would marvel, in Byam's words, at "the crazy Norte Americanos who would dare to drive Cadillacs where jeeps feared to tread."

Byam was an audacious showman and he exulted in the spectacle that his expeditions created. The arrival of a fleet of Airstreams in a town often seemed a triumphant parade. On the first European caravan in 1956, Byam and his followers took to fanning out into a huge wagon wheel before the waiting crowds. Locals found it hard to believe these were just American tourists on vacation.

"People couldn't conceive that we as individuals owned these things," says Mort Nolan of San Diego, a veteran of the Round-the-World Caravan in the early '60s. "In Southeast Asia, people seeing all these metal monsters were sure they were being invaded by the U.S. Army."

In 1959, Wally Byam led the charge of 41 Airstreams from Capetown to Cairo, a 9,000-mile trek. The road in some places was often just a camel path ("Not even the elephants would walk on it," Byam wrote).

Crossing Africa's gullies and deserts

"In Ethiopia, we got stuck in gullies where we had to carry dirt on our heads," recalls Oscar Payne (left), who was 65 at the time. I ask why that was necessary. "To fill up the gullies, of course!" says his wife, Etta. Oscar today is 91, Etta is 83 and they still travel 10,000 miles a year. Before retiring, they owned a trailer park in Thermopolis, Wyoming, called Fountain of Youth RV Park.

"In the Sudan desert," says Oscar, "if you broke through the crust on the sand, you were done for." "We'd line 'em up, side by side," says Etta, "and ride as hard as we could in second gear—like a big land rush. After a mile or two, the trailers would all be stuck and we'd have to dig each other out and start over again."

In the African deserts, the caravanners used brackish well water to wash their hair, then reused it to wash dishes, then reused that to flush the toilet. Axles broke. Transmissions gave out. Vehicles were gouged and dented. But inside the trailers, the Airstream way of life persisted: the travelers savored shrimp dinners,

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Frank and Vivian Sargent led China caravanners in official WBCCI departure ceremonies on July 4, 1985.

cocktails with ice cubes, music by Leonard Bernstein, and a good night's sleep in their own beds.

Africa veteran Alfred Frosch, now 70, says he's ready to do it again. "Sure, we ate a lot of dust," he allows, "but we had a good time!" Frosch, then 45, brought along his wife and three young daughters. "We parked most of the time in circles and had bonfires in the middle at night, just like in the olden days with the covered-wagon trains," he says. "Our family didn't have much money, but it only cost us $10 a day for everything."

To Wally Byam, trips like these were more than just publicity stunts. They were missions. "The whole Asian continent is still to feel the throb of our wheels," he wrote in 1959. "We will do it one day, a mechanized Caravan threading the trail spice-bearing camels once trod, bringing with us as they did, the products, philosophy, and good will of a whole new way of life."

When Byam died, he was planning the Round-the-World Caravan, Singapore to Lisbon. Since then, the glory days of overseas Airstreaming have ended, largely because the cost of shipping a trailer has climbed out of sight. Domestic caravanning has run afoul of a more fundamental problem. Twenty years ago, almost any American car could pull the largest Airstream. Today, virtually none of them can. The boom in trailering in the '50s and '60s ended abruptly in the '70s when gas prices soared and cars began to shrink.

Most of the vehicles pulling Airstreams around these days are station-wagon/truck hybrids that cost close to $15,000. Add to that another $23,000 to $40,000 for the trailer itself and you have a sum that will sap the enthusiasm of many a would-be trailerite. From a high of 24,000 in the mid-'70s, WBCCI membership dropped to 16,000 by the end of the decade. It now stands at 18,000. Airstream Inc., the manufacturer, ran the club until 1979. The two organizations now occupy buildings at opposite ends of Jackson Center, Ohio.

"We still need them, and they need us," says Gerry Letourneau, president of Airstream. "I laugh when people say it's camping," he says. "Camping is what Boy Scouts do. An Airstream is a house." He notes that some zoning boards still take a dim view of trailers parked in their towns. "And yet that Airstream in that park may cost more than the house the man on the zoning commission lives in."

Inside the assembly building in Jackson Center, I watch groups of men cut, bend and rivet huge sheets of aluminum. In a brightly lit test chamber, 44 high-pressure water jets bombard a finished shell as men inside check for leaks with flashlights. The company has begun to branch out, and in a nearby building I inspect an Airstream funeral coach, complete with roll-out coffin rack and velvet armchairs.

Custom orders have always been a big part of the company's business. NASA once used Airstreams to quarantine its astronauts before and after flights. The heart of the company's business, however, remains the travel trailer; it has provided (at a reduced price) 11 custom-built Airstreams for a series of China caravans. The first began at Xiamen (Amoy) and returned there after a one-month tour of Fujian Province. There are plans for seven more groups of 20 to follow in the next one and a half years, each crew using the same 11 trailers. When the last caravan ends, the Chinese will get them.

A big hit as tourists in China

The first caravanners were a big hit in China, a land where age is venerated: the average age of the group was 70. Most venerable of all were the unstoppable Oscar and Etta Payne, all 174 combined years of them. Because the caravanners had their own fully-equipped homes, they played host to the Chinese at every stop, a rare opportunity for foreign tourists.

The trip's mastermind and leader was a dapper, self-assured 76-year-old inventor named Frank Sargent. Many of the old-timers say Sargent is cut from the same cloth as Wally Byam himself. Like Byam, he has a personal stake in the proliferation of trailer travel: he invented the Porta-Potti, a self-contained, portable toilet that RV drivers consider the greatest thing since rubber tires. And like Byam, he likes to expound on the joys of trailering (opposite).

"It's only for the last 500 generations, a wink of an

eye historically, that men have been settling down in one place," he told me when I visited his trailer at Lake Placid. "Man has within him a desire to venture forth and be nomadic." To hear Sargent tell it, trailering seems an irresistible way of life. But those who live and travel in trailers sometimes find it hard to explain to others. To the stay-at-homes, nonstop Airstreaming smacks of hoboism.

"Even our best friends and our family don't understand our way of life" says Gay Trowbridge, a retired insurance executive from Kingston, New York. Gay and her husband, Bernard, both in their 50s, have been full-timers since the day three years ago when Bernard retired from IBM. The adjustment from house to trailer has been hardest on their three grown daughters, they say. "There were a lot of tears," Gay recalls. "They don't understand why we gave up our beautiful 14-room house that we'd just had redone, and then bought a trailer and took off. One of our daughters said, '*You* weren't supposed to leave home. *We* were.' We're trying to educate them."

Gay says they had dreamed about owning an Airstream ever since their first camping trip together. "Our tent fell down in a rainstorm with a six-week-old baby at Cedar Point State Park—remember, Bernard?—and an Airstream pulled in and invited us in for coffee." Since buying an Airstream and moving aboard, they've toured the United States and joined caravans to Mexico three times. "When we tell our working friends what we're doing," says Bernard,"a lot of them say, 'I'd love to do that.' But they've always got a reason why they can't do it."

The Trowbridges say that Airstreaming has become their whole existence. "Now we're busier than we've ever been in our lives," Gay says. "We love tennis, but we don't have time for it. Bernard loves to fish, but he doesn't have time for it. And things aren't going to slow down—I finally got that through my head."

The Sargents' 34-foot Airstream was customized to accommodate an electric organ instead of a credenza.

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BEST OF ALL...IT'S A CADILLAC.

By Paul Trachtman

New American dance is making everyday movement into art

Contemporary choreographers toss aside classic styles, create a gritty, natural art form that 'stands on its own two feet'

In a barely made-over parking garage and warehouse known as The Dance Place in Washington, D.C., choreographer Lesa McLaughlin leads two elegant dancers, as deceptively slender as she is, through the first brutal phrases of a duet she is creating. The next time they come to rehearsal, she warns, they should bring elbow pads, knee pads, and cut their fingernails.

In the iron-grated gym of a vandalized and all-but-abandoned New York City public school, Marta Renzi choreographs a new piece. A partner hefts her precariously aloft onto the colliding shoulders of other dancers who have rushed to catch her: in a reckless duet with gravity, she explores all the ways she can roll, slide and fall from their backs.

In the bare, white-walled studio of her SoHo loft in lower Manhattan, Trisha Brown demonstrates to her dancers a new movement phrase, one so complex even to their trained eyes that she must go over it again and again. "Actually," she tries to explain, "as I'm going up, I'm going down." Finally they get it, adding the phrase to a vocabulary of movements in which dancers appear to slam into imaginary walls and emerge unscathed on the other side, to walk on real walls or through the air, always ending up somewhere other than where they were headed. Meanwhile, Brown pitches herself into a solo in which she seems to be falling off her own back.

Watching these three choreographers at work, you are likely to see the sort of moves that would draw penalties on a basketball court, or raise dust on a sandlot. Clearly, this is not traditional dance. The dancers are living their movement as much as presenting it. They breathe hard and they sweat, and that's part of the dance. Between high-tension phrases, they hitch up their pants and walk around as casually as if they'd forgotten they're even on a stage, and that's part of the dance, too.

What these choreographers share, despite distinctive differences in styles of movement and composition, is a belief that dance is about real people, and that dancers should act like the people they really are. "Dance has been a dumb little sister to the arts forever," says Brown. "It's the twirl-and-show-me-your-petticoats kid in the living room. We have to develop an independent art form which can stand on its own two feet."

Brown, Renzi and McLaughlin represent three gen-

In street clothes, Lesa McLaughlin & Dancers perform at Dance Place. Here, E'Dior FitzGerald is caught in midflip by Dave Esguerra, as McLaughlin and Cheryl Bedenbaugh (rear) and Mary Beth Flournoy hinge, twist and lean into highly athletic dance phrases.

Color photographs by Jonathan Atkin

Jack Mitchell

"Is it true," a critic asked, "that Trisha Brown can lie on air?" Here, with Stephen Petronio, she tries it.

erations in a revolution that has come to be called "postmodern" dance, a term that hardly describes its surprising energy and physicality and the forms of beauty it finds in ordinary movement. "I'm enraptured by movement," says Brown, who once compared her own movement to "rubber butter," and has been investigating its possibilities for two decades. "I have a democratic idea about the distribution of parts," she says. "I'm like a very fair card dealer in terms of what's going on where in the space, how fast and when, and in what quality. But on the other hand, when I start getting bored with that movement, with that distribution, I wreck it."

Marta Renzi might never have become a dancer were it not for the activities of Brown and her coconspirators in subverting dance tradition. Renzi remembers a childhood dance teacher fondly, but recalls one recital when, at 16, she donned lederhosen and danced Hansel to an 8-year-old's Gretel. It was "the most humiliating thing I could do." She went to college to be a lawyer but, eventually, the new forms of dance enticed her. Renzi has danced on New York City streets, on a ferry, on the top of a moving car, wanting people to find dance where they least expect it. Her dances are always about relationships, among the dancers and with the audience. Brown and other dancers sometimes talk to an audience. Renzi starts conversations with them. "If you have any questions, I'd like to hear them," she says in the middle of one dance, "so if I'm quiet, you don't have to be."

"When you see dancers across the lights on a big stage," she says, "they're the glory people and you're the watcher. When people watch my work, I don't want them to feel like 'only skinny girls can do the ballet,' or 'my wife can't dance like those people, she's my wife.' "

Renzi makes a similar distinction between her work and breakdancing, although the latter's street vocabulary is closer to what she does than is ballet. "The breakdancers may do what they do in street clothes," she says, "but it's virtuosic and spectacular in ways I'm not trying to be. I'm trying to make dance with movement that people recognize as what they can do, not as the kind of movement they can't do."

When you see Renzi with one leg cocked in the air, executing a slow turn on the other, she wants you to see the unsteady foot. "Not the Olympiad straining," she says, "but the really trembling foot, the just sort of daily struggling around, because that's not usually presented as glorious or valuable."

Like Renzi, Lesa McLaughlin did not grow up wanting to dance. A year before she choreographed her first dance, she was breaking horses on a Virginia farm and planning to become a blacksmith. But instead of studying corrective shoeing at a farrier college, she tried a liberal arts school and took a dance class where new forms of movement were allowed, even encouraged. "I felt pretty fearless about how I approached the floor, or other people," she recalls, having played on high school softball, basketball and track teams. "I didn't have any problem about what dance is supposed to be. For some people, being on the floor with your face stuck in it is not dance. For me, if that's where you end up being, then it is."

"It's 1986 emotion and psychology"

In the vocabulary of McLaughlin's dances, motion and emotion are one word. "It's 1986 emotion and psychology," says *Washington Post* critic Alan Kriegsman, "about life experiences her audiences connect with." A dance about fast-changing relationships and assault is a brutal collage of muscular events, edited as tightly as television drama, and audiences sometimes gasp, or shed tears, while applauding the strength and technique of the dancers.

"My attitude about technique is the same as an athlete's about training," McLaughlin says, "because I've been an athlete and I want to be able to be that way in my dance. The difference is that the physical contact in dance means working together to achieve a movement or make a phrase, where in sports it's offense and defense; you're opponents working against each other."

The author is on SMITHSONIAN*'s Board of Editors.*

What these people are doing is so far removed from ballet and classic modern dance that, when their new style began to appear more than two decades ago, neither the performers nor the audience were sure it was dance at all. And some critics were certain it was not. The *New York Post*'s reviewer announcing "The Avant Garde Is At It Again," took notice of Yvonne Rainer as a leading rebel:

"She and her group are also the dullest in their relentless defiance of everything conventional in theatre and dance. Her 'Rose Fractions' was performed last night in sloppy street clothes—mostly jeans and sneakers, without benefit of hairbrush or make-up, sets, wing curtains or music. And the choreography consisted mainly of walking or running, aimless repetition, without grace, logic, style, sequence, virtuosity, or meaning."

Another rebel, David Gordon, recalls his own initial uncertainty as part of a group which began performing improvisations, talking and sometimes squabbling with each other and the audience about what they'd just done. "I clung desperately to the old material, refusing to improvise," Gordon says. "I thought they were all crazy and the audience that sat through what we were dishing out were crazier." One member of those early audiences, minimalist composer Steve Reich, remembers: "For a long time during the 1960s, one would go to the dance concert where no one danced, followed by the party where everyone danced."

Whatever else they were doing, the performers who put on those concerts were starting a revolution that has changed American dance, spreading from lofts and gyms to the country's most prominent stages. After two decades of relative obscurity, the new dance troupes have begun attracting national attention and large audiences. This year, David Gordon saw a work of his performed by American Ballet Theatre at the Metropolitan Opera House. Trisha Brown, after premiering a new work at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis, appeared at New York's City Center for a week-long engagement that drew nearly 7,500 people.

"The United States is cultured!" Brown exclaimed after an earlier nine-city tour. "The audiences are there. I don't know how they knew about me, but they came—and they got it, they were right with me." In the next two years, many more people will get a first look at some of the new dance groups as a National Performance Network (NPN), funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ford Foundation, sponsors tours to 14 cities in all parts of the country.

"A lot of producers in small centers around the country are interested in the new artists coming along," says David White, director of the Dance Theatre Workshop in New York and organizer of the NPN. "People are going to see new kinds of performances in Seattle, in L.A., in Atlanta—not just New York—and the NPN helps to put those cities on the map. In a sense it helps to create the map of what an American culture is."

At the Walker Arts Center, Robert Stearns, Director

At New York's City Center, Brown dances solo in style she describes as "kicking in and taking the ride." She often improvises movement first, and memorizes it in way "that doesn't make it seem like an old joke."

Rehearsing a dance performed on the Staten Island ferry in New York, Marta Renzi pivots on a pole.

of Performing Arts, thinks more people are coming to such performances now because the dancers are more interested in engaging and even entertaining an audience than in confronting it. The performances that draw crowds now are far more finished than the first experiments were. Today the choreographers know what a dance is, and the dancers know how to perform it. But at first, every step was a break with tradition and each new performance posed the question: What is a dance? Could a dance be performed in a telephone booth? One was. Would standing still constitute a dance? It was performed. Was it a dance if people just ran? In Yvonne Rainer's *We Shall Run,* 12 dancers tried it, and the event was even reviewed. A sympathetic *New York Times* critic, Allen Hughes, observed: "Sometimes they ran as a pack, sometimes they divided into groups, sometimes they huddled for an instant, but only as a respite from the gentle, rhythmic running that almost became hypnotic before it ended. . . . Crazy you think? Non-dance? Who's to say? If it isn't a dance, what is it?"

"She walks as if she's in the street"

The phrase "pedestrian movement" caught on as one way to describe what was going on. It set the dancers apart from the more pretentious aspects of ballet and classic modern dance. "Being puffed up in some state of yearning for something or other," says Trisha Brown, "always looked to me like bad acting." And what could be more pedestrian than walking? "I remember people saying of me at the time, 'She walks as if she's in the street,' " Yvonne Rainer recalls, "as if dancers were supposed to walk like queens."

The urge to find a body language closer to life was a recurring theme in modern dance. One of Martha Graham's young dancers, Merce Cunningham, had left her company in 1945 to take his turn in the avant-garde. Cunningham's dances had no relation to the music, and his steps had no apparent relation to each other—he sometimes used coins to select a sequence of steps. "One of the marvelous things about watching animals," he says, "is that we're not prepared for what they're going to do next. That's why we watch them. And humans are at least as flexible as animals—any movement can follow any movement. We don't have fixed patterns."

What seemed natural to Cunningham, however, seemed as stylized in its own fragmented way as ballet to some of his dancers and students in the early 1960s. And before long the avant-garde was indeed at it again. From a workshop held at his studio, the pedestrian rebels set out in search of a new place to dance.

They found it at the Judson Memorial Church in Greenwich Village, where clergyman Al Carmines

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Dancing before crowd at New York's Battery Park City landfill, Renzi upends her partner, Peter Stathas. She prefers performing where audiences don't expect to see dance, instead of on a conventional stage.

gave them a tentative welcome. "I was scared of the kind of dance they did," he recalled. "I was used to ballet, maybe Martha Graham. I hadn't seen Merce Cunningham. I said they'd have to give their first three concerts in the gymnasium, and the board of the church would have to decide whether it was proper to do in the sanctuary."

The church did provide a sanctuary for a few years and the name "Judson" became a synonym for the new dance wherever it appeared, in whatever form. Allen Hughes, describing the motley congregation of "dancers, painters, actors, musicians, writers, and goodness knows what else that calls itself the Judson Dance Theatre," wrote in the *New York Times*: "If they are unified in any way, it is only in the belief that dancing must be done, that anyone can do it, that almost anything anyone does qualifies as dancing, that it can be done anywhere, and that conventions of artistic thought and practice exist only to be smashed."

Ballet took it on the chin from most members of the Judson group. Yvonne Rainer's choreography included jumping into a pile of white gauze, symbolic of the ballet, and throwing a tantrum. Sarah Rudner, who began dancing with choreographer Twyla Tharp during the Judson years, although not usually at the church, remembers one of their first dances as a tantrum with a different twist: it was a trio with one member of the group dancing lyrically near the angry performers. In saying no to ballet, Rudner recalls, they were all saying "We've got to do better. Human expression is worth more than just merely putting on a tutu and a pair of pink toeshoes and pretending you're a fairy."

While many still took ballet classes to keep in shape, the dancers shared a new attitude that put performers on an equal footing, and sometimes eye to eye, with the audience. Rudner, after dancing on large stages as well as in lofts, sees the change as an emotional challenge to the audiences, as well as the performers. "If you can convince someone to come and see dancing close up," she says, "they have a potential of falling in love with it in a way you can't when you see it far away on stage. Some people fear that direct contact. My very own mother would say, 'Oh, I hate to see you sweat: it's just so much hard work. I think I'll sit farther back.' But a lot of other people, when they see the real work of it, become more engaged."

The dancers themselves became more engaged in what they were doing as they let go of established techniques and tried out new forms of movement that

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All: Paul Trachtman

In Trisha Brown's loft, Diane Madden goes over a phrase with Randy Warshaw, hoisting him by one leg.

Rehearsing at George Mason University, where she teaches, Lesa McLaughlin choreographs a new dance.

fit their own bodies. "Many dancers get so tired of pushing themselves around to fit somebody else's image," Rudner says, "that they get bored." That was hardly the case when she started working with Twyla Tharp, whose choreography has since reached to Hollywood and Broadway. "We went to a common heritage, walking and running," says Tharp, "the movement birthright of every two-legged being. We were trying to get to the bottom of it all, to discover the absolute necessities of dance. We were very, very serious at the time, and thought of ourselves, righteously and rigorously, as a bunch of broads doing God's work."

An artistic if not missionary zeal for discovery was common among the Judson dancers. Much of the new dance that emerged from the church began with the search for a natural-movement vocabulary, although everyone had different ideas about what was natural. Some sought it in improvisation and spontaneity, others in mathematical formulas or gamelike rules for movement, still others in pedestrian tasks or the pursuit of their own particular awkwardness.

In trying to discover what dance was for her, Trisha Brown developed a breathtaking task that gave "pedestrian" a new meaning: walking down the side of a New York apartment building with mountain-climbing equipment. "It was really a dance-making machine," she says, "in that, once I determined what it would do, I knew when it would start, how it would proceed, what one should do and when it would be over—when you got to the bottom. In one sense it was like a very simple diagram of what a dance is; on the other hand, it was a spectacular performance to watch because it was a seven-story building and a human

Here she tumbles backward after catching Mary Beth Flournoy's heel, flipping her partner over as well.

In vacant public school gym, Marta Renzi works on finding new ways Peter Stathas can slide off her back.

being that was walking down it, going the wrong way."

It was also full of risk, often a key element in new dance since the Judson years. By putting themselves at risk—physical risk—dancers experienced a surge of energy and focus, and their performances acquired a new realism. Their movements took on that quality philosopher John Dewey once described as "fully present."

"The live animal is fully present," Dewey wrote, "all there, in all of its actions: in its wary glances, its sharp sniffings, its abrupt cocking of ears. All senses are equally on the qui vive. As you watch, you see motion merging into sense and sense into motion—constituting that animal grace so hard for man to rival."

What Dewey perceived, the connection between sense and movement, was about all that dancers had to work with once they stripped dance of its formal patterns and traditional techniques. And often it was through improvisation or accident that they began to make sense of their own ways of moving. A duet form called contact improvisation, developed by sports-minded Judson dancer Steve Paxton, helped many dancers discover that their bodies could move quite sensibly if they did not let their minds get in the way.

In contact improvisation, two dancers support each other without using their hands, and then allow themselves to move freely through an unpredictable vocabulary of lifts, rolls and falls, while always maintaining some point of bodily contact. This "art sport" as it was called, produced frequent falls and recoveries, along with some bruised knees and wrenched backs.

One of Trisha Brown's dancers, Randy Warshaw, remembers his early experiences in contact improvisation as developing patterns for survival movement. "In the first part," he says, "the teacher would set up a

controlled situation where you're falling off someone's back, so that you have time to work out the patterns. And then when you're openly improvising and you start to fall off someone's back, you don't have time to think, 'Now, how did I do that movement?' My first awareness of muscle memory was when I started falling off people's backs—I found that I could put myself in a risky situation and trust in the intelligence of my body's solution to it."

Trisha Brown recalls her early "excavations" into the nature of her own movement as a form of improvising, with herself. She observed that whenever the body abruptly moves one way, there is a fallout of countermovements and readjustments, and that these reverberations could be the material of dance. "When I come around and stop a gesture really hard, that sends something through my body in about 50 ways. It runs through me with the complexity of a sneeze."

What made Brown's dancing more arresting to watch than a sneeze were the real physical dramas in the movement. "You might associate drama with acting," she says, "but these are like factual dramas. I am actually taking my base off-center, and in losing balance like that I create an urgency which informs me about how to move in my recovery. I'm not acting or inflating or behaving in a pretentious manner. This peril of falling is close at hand and over in a second."

In her choreography, Brown's dancers relate to each other in space much as do the parts of her own body, in a constant play of order and disorder. At moments they may look lost in random movement, but it is all strictly according to Brown's choreographic design. "I'm always facing forward, back, side or on a diagonal," she says. "I am never nowhere. I'm always very somewhere. We use basic dance motor activity: run, walk, skip, hop, jump. There's bend, straighten and rotate. And I've plundered the possibilities a thousand times."

"Unfalling" like a movie run backward

Brown's choreography is too complex to see all the details at once, but reverberations do keep turning up again in other bodies, and sequences of movement reappear; sometimes a fall will take place in reverse like a motion picture run backward. "You have to keep reminding yourself that you're going backward," says Diane Madden, one of Brown's dancers, "otherwise you'll just do it the way you do everything else. Because there's a whole different quality to unfalling. You have to keep your mind very alive with that idea."

In Brown's dances, the ideas keep changing but keeping your mind very alive to them is the essence for dancers and audience alike. "I'm fully in my movement while I'm doing it," she says, "like a skier who is committed to going around little poles at high velocity." It's that "fully present" quality that John Dewey saw in animals. "I believe in my movement," Brown says. "I'm head over heels for every move."

As one dance begins, Lesa McLaughlin creates the illusion of someone getting dressed before a mirror.

Since their first dances in a church sanctuary, Brown and her generation have headed in many new directions, moving onto larger stages and making the avant garde into a big box-office attraction. Those who came later have inherited an expanded idea of dance and have added their own new ways of moving. Where Trisha Brown says "I am never nowhere," Marta Renzi adds for herself, "It's not just where I am, it's who I am. I am never no one. Even doing abstract movement, I can't for a minute forget that I am Marta, a woman, a small stocky person, in the space with the taller person near me."

"The whole area of dance is so grown now," says Merce Cunningham, "that it's the diversity that's interesting, not any particular thing that one person or another calls dance." One measure of the Judson revolution's success is how quickly it has become history. "I knew so little about dance when I was learning it," Lesa McLaughlin recalls, "that I didn't know the Judson Church was affecting me until I took dance history and found out what the Judson Church was."

She then combines searing looks and dramatic gestures in a dance about the blending of male, female roles.

But now, as light pours through the warehouse windows of The Dance Place, McLaughlin is choreographing a new work for another company and trying to get the dancers to walk naturally. "They have such a hard time," she says. "They still have preconceptions about how a dancer is supposed to walk. One walks and her shoulders don't move, another walks and his head doesn't move. A third is trying really hard to walk naturally, but you can tell she's trying really hard." After a while they all get it, and suddenly the dance looks more alive.

Clearly, the Judson revolution isn't over. "Everybody in the world walks the same," Merce Cunningham observes. "They have the same two feet, the mechanism is the same for walking. But everybody in the world walks differently, and there is where the expressiveness in movement lies.

"Dance at its best," he says, "can produce a heightening of the spectators' awareness of that expressiveness. It puts you in a situation where you can't decide, with your mind, what it is, so you have to use all your faculties to understand and appreciate it. So, often one leaves, because one doesn't like to be changed—it's painful to have our expectations not met . . . or, one goes back to look again."

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By Donald Dale Jackson

Making the world a safer place for primates in peril

Scientist Russell Mittermeier is spearheading a campaign to preserve critical habitat for lemurs, tamarins and other endangered species

A small creature with gleaming fur, the black lion tamarin is South America's most beleaguered monkey.

"Every time I hear that bird imitating the monkey call I get a pump of adrenaline," Russ Mittermeier whispers. His eyes flick across a tangle of branches and vines ten yards above the forest floor. "That's where they ought to be," he says. "I can *feel* their presence even if I can't see them. The habitat's perfect. They could appear in an instant."

Mittermeier and four companions are trekking through a patch of remnant rain forest in a remote part of the state of São Paulo, in southeastern Brazil, in search of one of the world's rarest, most elusive and most endangered monkeys, the black lion tamarin. Despite its imposing name, the black lion—which is also known as the golden-rumped tamarin—weighs barely more than a pound. The best guess is that between six and 20 of the animals live in this state-owned forest reserve, but sighting one is not easy. They show themselves so rarely that for most of this century they were believed to be extinct, and the 50 to 100 remaining are now known to occupy only two protected forest reserves in São Paulo. "I've looked for them five times going back to 1971," Mittermeier says, "walked at least 200 kilometers and seen *nada*. I've never had this much trouble finding an animal. I think they're hiding from me."

A black lion or any other monkey, ape or lemur who hides from the 36-year-old, New York-born Mittermeier is making a serious mistake; they should all be *looking* for him. He is the best friend our primate cousins have ever had. As field biologist, on-the-ground conservationist and director of the Primate Program of the World Wildlife Fund-U.S., he has been their ardent champion and tireless protector for more than a decade. His mission is to save the planet's 200 or so surviving primate species from extinction. It is an often frustrating task, but it's also a role that he invented for himself, the only job he ever really wanted and one that he performs with a mix of scientific authority, diplomatic finesse and nonstop energy.

"There are two theories on how to look for monkeys," he explains as he half-trots along the jungle trail, clad in a camouflage shirt, green running shorts and sneakers, and burdened with a tripod and a rucksack full of camera gear. "One way is to go slowly and stop every hundred yards. The other is to keep moving and cover more distance. That's my way. You have to be fast to see anything when you're looking for—hold it!" The point man has veered into the forest, his finger to his lips, and Mittermeier follows, treading carefully to avoid twigs and dry leaves.

A swishing sound breaks the stillness from perhaps 50 feet overhead. Mittermeier eyes a tufted capuchin monkey gliding gracefully through the branches. His tensed shoulders relax. "Capuchins are common here," he says. "We'll see a lot of them." Three more flow through the high limbs like streaks of dark liquid. "Hear that cracking sound? They're breaking nuts." He makes a quick notation in his notebook as he heads back to the trail.

Mittermeier's mandate is a tough assignment. With

In São Paulo, Brazil, Mittermeier scans the forest for evidence of elusive black lion tamarin (opposite). He looks for shaking branches, listens for telltale sounds. A colleague calls him "Russell of the Apes."

Saving the world's imperiled primates

A nocturnal lemur, the aye-aye of Madagascar is the only living member of an entire primate group.

few exceptions the world's simians make their living in the tropical forest land of Africa, Asia and Latin America, forests that are being systematically and irreversibly decimated for agriculture, timber and fuel to meet the needs of exploding populations. An estimated 27 million acres of rain forest—an area roughly the size of the state of New York—are cleared every year. But although habitat destruction is the major threat, primates are also increasingly vulnerable to hunting in many countries and, to a lesser extent, to capture for the limited pet trade and medical research.

Inexorably, primate populations have declined almost everywhere. Sixty-seven species are now classified as endangered, vulnerable or rare. Some, like the black lion tamarin, have been nudged to the brink of extinction. The muriqui, or woolly spider monkey, is South America's largest primate; its numbers have fallen to between 200 and 300. Fewer than 400 mountain gorillas survive in central Africa. It requires a leap of faith that transcends logic for Mittermeier and his fellow primate fanciers to retain any optimism. Archie Carr III, assistant director of Wildlife Conservation International at New York's Bronx Zoo, is unable to make the leap easily. "I think that the Amazon forests, if current trends continue, will be reduced to a few little patches and parks, a few protected islands, in another generation," he says. And then he adds, "It's hopeless. And the same thing could happen in the Congo Basin."

Scientists argue persuasively that saving the rainforest ecosystems, with their watersheds and food sources and medicinal plants, is sound policy economically as well as ecologically. But it is here that long-range conservation goals collide with short-run economic imperatives as well as political sensibilities. "How do you look people in the eye who aren't sure where their next meal is coming from and tell them not to use their land?" asks Alison Richard, a Yale anthropologist who studies Madagascar lemurs. The answer, she says, is simple: "You don't."

Also at stake: human aspirations

Scientists like Richard and Mittermeier began as researchers scrutinizing certain species, but the pressure for development has forced them to stretch their vision beyond primatology. Field scientists, says Carr, now realize that "what's at stake are people too, and human aspirations." "We're talking about management of a global ecological system," adds Robert Hoage, special assistant to the director of Smithsonian's National Zoo, "and that means managing people. We have to make the land and animals more valuable in their pristine forms than if they're developed."

Mittermeier, who heads the Primate Specialist

Seemingly lost in thought, an adult male orangutan bites on its lip and wrings its fingers. A tree-living ape, the orangutan is threatened by disappearance of the rain forests in some parts of Borneo and Sumatra.

Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) in addition to his job with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), must hack a trail through this thicket of conflicting demands and priorities. He travels constantly to raise money and doles out $250,000 annually to researchers and conservation groups in the tropics. He scours the Third World for home-grown scientists and sponsors training programs to develop more of them.

Rather than lobby directly to establish or upgrade protected reserves—many are so feebly funded that they are reserves in name only—he operates at a diplomatically discreet remove, through local agencies and organizations. He stresses national pride. "People often don't realize that they have a unique species in their country," he says. "They're surprised we don't have them in America." He exploits that pride by building educational campaigns around so-called "flagship species"—also known as "charismatic megafauna"—like gorillas and muriquis. He collects data on the status of threatened primates and encourages captive-breeding programs as a last-ditch strategy for saving the most endangered.

These efforts to conserve primates are coordinated worldwide through a series of "action plans." Mittermeier prepared the first of these in 1977 and is now updating the plan for South America. Plans for Africa and Asia are being drawn up by Dr. John Oates, of the City University of New York, and Dr. Ardith Eudey, who is an expert on the primates of Asia.

Mittermeier realizes that economic trade-offs will inevitably be part of any survival plan. The beleaguered primates' best hope, he believes, would be the creation of multiple-use zones he calls "mosaics" in the forests. "The ideal would be a core of completely protected reserves surrounded by areas where farming, logging and some hunting are permitted."

When asked to explain his devotion to simian preservation, Mittermeier dutifully ticks off the economic, ecological and anthropological arguments be-

Donald Dale Jackson, a frequent contributor, recently spent a week in Brazil trying to keep up with indefatigable Russ Mittermeier.

A gallery of primates living on the brink

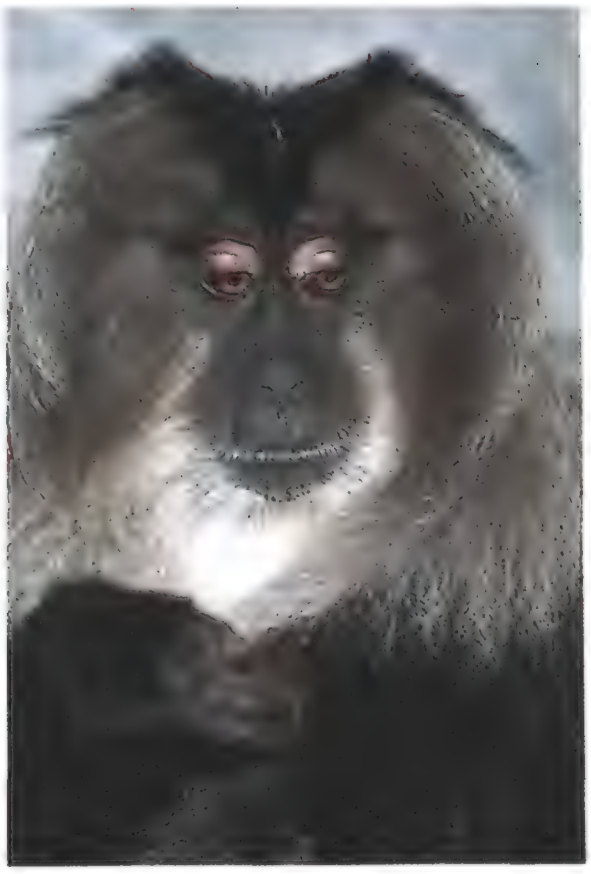
Pileated gibbon (left) holds out in Thailand against poaching, farming.

Red uakari (above) is being hunted as food by people in the Amazon Basin.

Golden lion tamarin (above) is being "reintroduced" into wilds of Brazil.

Concolor gibbon (a baby, left) hangs on in China, Vietnam, Laos.

Proboscis monkey (above) is harmed by clearing of its forests in Borneo.



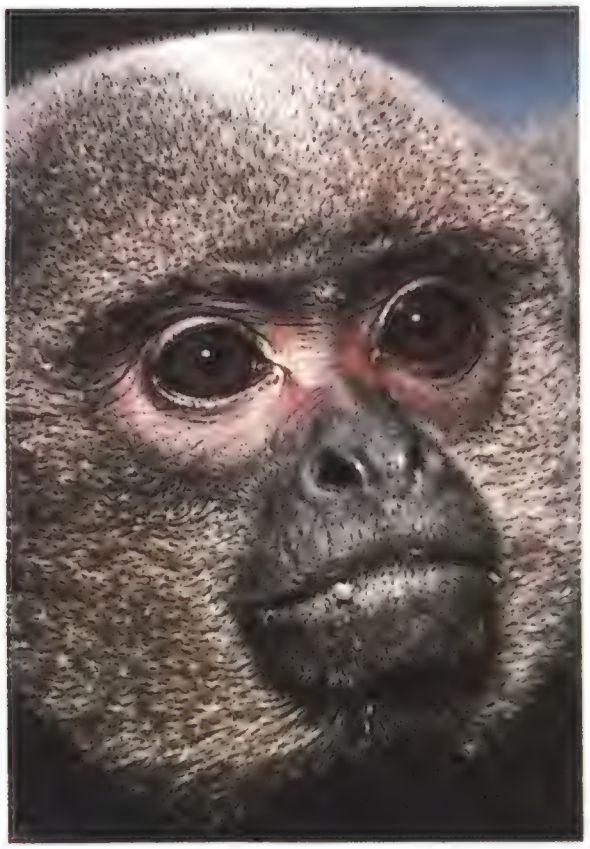
Marimonda spider monkey (above) lost ground in Colombia, Venezuela.

Lion-tailed macaque (left) is the most endangered primate in India.

Threatened lowland gorilla is more abundant than mountain cousin.

Goeldi's monkey (right) survives in sparse numbers, upper Amazonia.

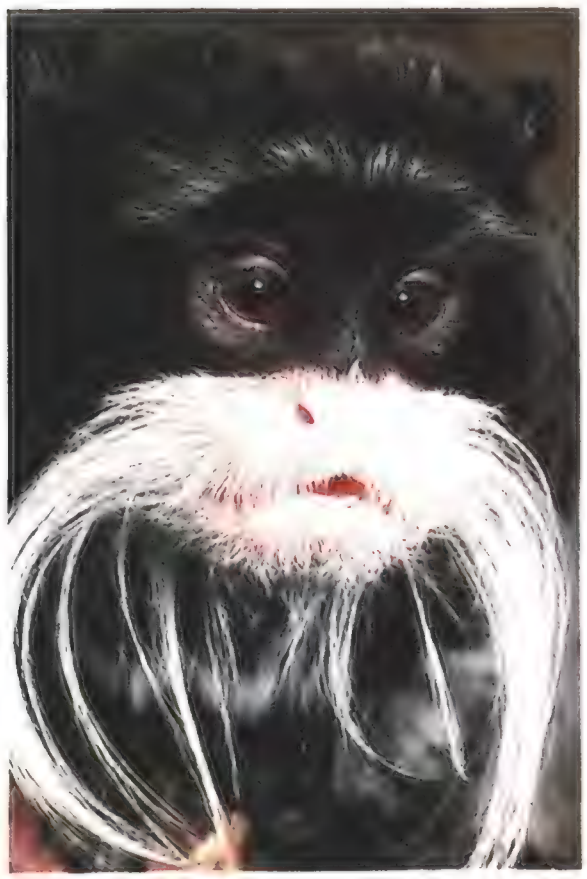
Geoffroy's spider monkey (above) lives only in Nicaragua and Costa Rica.



Woolly monkey (above), native of Amazonia, is sought for pet trade.

Cotton-top tamarin (below) competes with livestock for land in Colombia.

Mongoose lemur (above), like many Madagascar lemurs, faces extinction.



Drill (right), a baboon, is besieged in Nigeria and Cameroon by hunters.

Emperor tamarin (left) is headed for trouble in Brazil, Peru, Bolivia.

Followed by Brazilian colleague, Mittermeier hacks his way through the thick jungle brush with a machete.

fore he lags up at the real reason: they are beautiful. "I think the esthetic reason is sufficient," he says. "Monkeys are greater works of art than anything Man has made, and to me that's something fantastic."

Mittermeier and his search party are now moving stealthily down a rutted road. Parrots and green toucanets squawk their disdain from overhead. A thick vine hangs from a fig tree like a limp fire hose. Carlos Alberto Machado Pinto, the point man, squats and circles a triangular animal track in the dirt. "*Anta*," he says. Tapir. There are also ocelots, peccaries and armadillos in this 5,000-acre reserve, which is one of the few remnants of the great Atlantic Rain Forest of southeastern Brazil. Once it covered four-fifths of the state of São Paulo, but today it constitutes about three percent; the rest was either cleared for plantations and ranches or logged. Most of the black lion tamarins, along with dozens of other species, disappeared when the forest did. Mittermeier has made the besieged simians of the Atlantic Forest his specialty.

The primate protector has just received some good news: São Paulo's huge state-owned power company will contribute about $500,000 toward supporting the two reserves that are home to the surviving black lions. Mittermeier is ecstatic. "It's just what we want to happen!" he cries in his eager, almost adolescent voice. "Brazilians are really becoming conservation-minded." There is also a trade-off involved: a hydroelectric dam will soon flood part of one of the reserves. "But as compromises go, this isn't bad," he exults. He almost forgets that he has still not seen a black lion tamarin.

"Maybe we should do a rain dance," he suggests. "When I used to catch box turtles on Long Island I'd sometimes dream where I was going to find them—and they'd be there." Claudio Padua, who heads the research team studying black lions and is assistant director of Brazil's Rio de Janeiro Primate Center, points to a dead tree just off the road, where the tiny monkeys were last spotted. Six were trapped and blood samples were taken so their genetic variation could be studied. This could be important if scientists try to save the species by breeding them in captivity.

The monkey-man smoothes his bangs

Suddenly an alien sound—the whine of a motor—pierces the silence. A moment later a van appears. A television reporter wearing a leisure suit, and a cameraman in a leather jacket and cowboy boots jump out. They want to interview the famous American monkey-man, but they will wait until we reach a bait station a mile away. Mittermeier smoothes his long dark bangs and tugs at his floppy socks. "I'll give them the 'Brazil is the most important country in the world for primates' rap," he says.

The bait station proves to be two long elevated trays filled with corn kernels and bananas about 15 yards from a two-storied shed where observers can watch from a balcony. Soon after we arrive, a capuchin edges onto a tray, chatters at us and grabs a handful of kernels. For the next hour, perhaps a dozen other capuchins come and go in ones and twos, materializing phantomlike from the trees to snatch up the food and then dart away, looking like children pillaging a cookie jar. "Ah, they're so great," Mittermeier sighs. "You see how they look up? They're checking for raptors." They clearly do not realize who Mittermeier is, even when he is giving his rap, in flawless Portuguese, to the interviewer: "Brazil has 51 primate species, more than any other country. . . ." Padua, who attends graduate school in Florida, smiles at Mittermeier as the TV crewmen pack up and leave. "Russell of the Apes rides again," he says.

Mittermeier has been Russell of the Apes, either in his fantasies or in fact, ever since a Bronx schoolteacher asked him as a six-year-old what he wanted to

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Biologist Claudio Padua takes notes as Mittermeier (center) and Machado Pinto set up traps for tamarins.

be. "I said a jungle explorer," he remembers. The Tarzan books he discovered as an eighth-grader helped crystallize his ambition. "I read all of the Edgar Rice Burroughs books and something clicked with me."

Growing up in the Bronx and Long Island as the only child of a German immigrant couple—his father was a stamp dealer—young Russell prowled nearby ponds in search of turtles and snakes, and accompanied his mother on regular forays to the Bronx Zoo and the Museum of Natural History. His parents nourished his love for animals by letting him have a cement-floored turtle pond in the backyard, not far from his high-jump and pole-vault bars. At 16 he was already contributing articles with titles like "Collecting herps at Calverton Pond" to a local journal.

He zeroed in on primates as his life's work as an undergraduate at Dartmouth, where he was graduated *summa cum laude* in 1971, and as a Harvard graduate student who spent more time roaming the Latin American tropics than in classrooms. Even before he earned his PhD, Mittermeier's fieldwork with howlers, spider monkeys and other primates and his commitment to their conservation had drawn the attention of the IUCN and the WWF as well as admiring colleagues. Mark Plotkin, a friend and an ethnobotanist who is also with the WWF, remembers telling a fellow student that he was going to Venezuela to search for a rare lizard. "You'll never find it," he was told. Mittermeier was going with him, Plotkin said. "You'll find it," the student said. And of course they did.

The IUCN tapped Mittermeier to lead its Primate Specialist Group, a network of research primatologists, in 1977 and two years later he signed on with the WWF's U.S. office. "The primate project was what I was already doing anyway," he says.

Mittermeier is happiest when he's sloshing through a jungle swamp stalking a primate few people have ever seen. But monkey-country excursions can sometimes lead to alarming encounters with less lovable mammals. In Suriname, Mittermeier once found himself staring at a jaguar seven feet away. "It stood there for several seconds. Then there was a little swish and it was gone." Searching for gibbons in Thailand, he surprised a tiger about 30 feet distant. "It turned toward us and the guy with me started to run," he recalls. "I told him you're not supposed to run away from cats and then I ran like hell myself. I went right past him."

These days he is still on the run, bolting from lecture dates to international meetings to visits with scientists working on WWF projects in the tropics, alighting every few weeks with his battered luggage at his office on the campus of State University of New York at Stony Brook. He managed to remain stationary long enough to get married on the Fourth of July in 1984, but a few weeks later he and his bride, Isabel, who is also a biologist, were rushing around Africa.

In his role as the primates' chief emissary he commissions and exhibits films, churns out articles and distributes posters and T-shirts bearing monkey mug shots. "My function is catalytic," he says. "I invest in key people and try to get things moving." The rewards come when he sees his message take hold. A few years ago, for example, hardly anyone in Brazil knew about muriquis. Now they're on stamps and phone books.

Changing the course of history?

His linguistic facility is one key to Mittermeier's effectiveness. He exhorts, gossips, jokes in seven languages and he can get by in several others. He has a talent for becoming what his colleague Claudio Padua calls "a citizen of wherever he is," a gift for cultural adaptation that phases into easy acceptance. His goal, beyond the general aim of preserving primate diversity, is to achieve major conservation breakthroughs in four countries—Brazil, Peru, Suriname and Madagascar—all of which happen to be primate-heavy precincts. "I want to be able to look back someday and see that the course of conservation history changed because of our efforts," he declares.

Primate conservation is clearly no cause for the short-winded. Its victories tend to glow more brightly because the surrounding gloom is so dense. Still there have been a few, as a sampling of the latest communiqués from the front makes clear.

Gorillas: Between 300 and 400 highly endangered mountain gorillas survive in the Virunga volcanoes on the border of Rwanda, Uganda and Zaire and in the

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Impenetrable Forest of Uganda. The population has remained fairly stable since the early 1970s, largely due to the development of a gorilla-watching tourist industry in Rwanda. Guides lead visitors to sites where humans and the unaggressive apes can safely gaze at each other at close range. Managed by the African Wildlife Foundation, the tourist project is, in Mittermeier's opinion, "a great example of preserving a species by turning it into an economic asset." Lowland gorillas, though listed as vulnerable, are more widespread and abundant.

Chimpanzees: Scientist Jane Goodall's work with the animals that probably qualify as mankind's favorite primates "put the science of primatology on the map," Mittermeier contends. Current estimates of chimp numbers in Africa range from 100,000 to more than 200,000. Rated as highly vulnerable, chimps are threatened by land clearing for agriculture and logging. They are also smuggled from West Africa to Spain and used as props for tourist snapshots. No reliable numbers exist for pygmy chimps, but their limited range in Zaire is threatened by logging.

Lemurs: Madagascar, which is the main home of all 28 species of lemurs, is in Mittermeier's view "the highest conservation priority in the world." Alison Richard, who has studied lemurs in Madagascar since 1970, believes that the rapid expansion of forest clearing for charcoal, and slash-and-burn agriculture have left most lemur species in danger of extinction. Mittermeier hopes to mount a major campaign to increase research and to boost conservation awareness.

Golden monkeys: Fur taken from these beautiful Chinese monkeys was once valued so highly that only the most elevated officials were permitted to wear it. Now their numbers are down to an estimated four-to-ten thousand mountain dwellers in six provinces of China. The government has protected them as a first-priority endangered species since 1957, but they are still pressured by habitat destruction.

Tamarins: Golden lion tamarins, distinguished from their black lion cousins primarily by their honey-hued coats, are the first endangered primates to benefit from a major captive-breeding and reintroduction program. A team of scientists from the National Zoo, led by Devra Kleiman and Benjamin Beck, bred them for a decade to increase their numbers and to maximize their genetic differentiation. They released the first batch of 13 animals in a Brazilian reserve in 1984. Three of the original 13 plus one offspring survived the first year. Another 11 were returned to the wild last summer. Their prospects for reestablishing themselves in the Atlantic Forests are still chancy, but the captive population is secure. Approximately two dozen of Mittermeier's elusive quarry, black lion tamarins, have been successfully bred in captivity at the Rio de Janeiro Primate Center.

Orangutans: These imposing natives of Borneo and Sumatra, Asia's only great apes, are listed as endangered and totally protected throughout their range. Earlier surveys estimated the number remaining at about 10,000, but more recent data suggest that the population may be larger. Young orangs are still taken illegally for the pet trade in Indonesia, but the animal's most formidable enemy is habitat destruction. Some experts predict that as much as 80 percent of the remaining forested land in Indonesia and Malaysia will be logged by the year 2000.

The plight of primates in other parts of the world is the furthest thing from Mittermeier's mind as the sun dips below the treetops in São Paulo. He and his companions are still walking and aching for a glimpse of the will-o'-the-wisp black lion tamarin. What they're really after is proof, validation of the little monkey's existence: fire, disease or a persistent predator might have already eliminated the few who were here two months ago. A shadowy blur high up in the canopy turns out to be another capuchin. Two trees rub together, producing a grating squeak. A final bend in the trail and the search is over. *Nada.*

If Mittermeier views his quest in any sense as a metaphor, a search for the last of its kind in a world becoming too crowded for monkeys, he is too reflexively good-natured to say so. He thinks he'll dump his gear and go for a three-mile run; he's only walked about ten miles today. "Not this time," he says of the tamarins, smiling. "They're not ready to show their faces to me yet. They want me to work some more."

Mittermeier works on his climbing, a skill he uses occasionally to collect primate food samples in trees.

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By Kenneth Woodward

In old San Antonio, *mestizaje* nurtures new American way

Anglos and Hispanics in this festive city are taking one giant step after another as their two cultures gradually merge into one

Young *charro*, or Mexican horseman, in the garb of his ancestors, parades flag during San Antonio's Fiesta.

Every spring, during Fiesta, San Antonians march in solemn procession to the Alamo to celebrate their ancestors' revolution against Mexico in 1836. Standing alone inside the shrine's stone chapel, Henry Guerra slowly reads aloud—as he has for the past 27 years—the names of the 188 men who died defending the Alamo against 4,000 Mexican soldiers. Some of them, like Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett, were American frontiersmen. Many others were recent immigrants from as far away as Scotland, Ireland and Germany. But the only authentic San Antonians among the defenders were men like Juan Abamillo, Toribio D. Losoya and Gregorio Esparza, whose presence inside the Alamo is often-ignored evidence that Hispanics, too, died for Texas' independence. "I was chosen to do the honors," smiles Guerra, a local broadcaster who is half Hispanic, "because I was the only one they could find who could pronounce all of the names."

Today, San Antonio has good reason to celebrate its Hispanic roots. More than half of the 843,000 population is now Hispanic and the city finds itself at the center of a second revolution that extends far beyond the borders of Texas. It might be described as the Spanish reconquest of the United States—this time by force of population, language and culture. Around a million Hispanics migrate to this country legally and illegally each year from Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. Already, the cores of at least ten major cities—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Miami among them—are, in effect, bilingual. In many of these cities, both English and Spanish words beam messages from billboards and identify barrio streets.

San Antonians think that they have much to teach the rest of the nation about how Anglo and Hispanic cultures can meld. In other North American cities, Hispanics tend to form their own communities of little Havanas or little San Juans. San Antonio is different. In politics and business, in the arts and language, in clothes and food, San Antonio is well ahead of the rest of the country in what the Spanish call *mestizaje*—the gradual merging of two peoples into one. "What you find here in San Antonio is the embryo of a new mestizo culture, with each side taking from the other," observes John Leeper, who is the director of the McNay Art Museum.

This blending recently entered a new and crucial phase when, after 150 years of Anglo domination, Hispanics won effective control of local politics. Within the past five years, Mexican-Americans have taken over city hall and the school board, as well as intermittent control of the county courthouse and the sheriff's office. At the head of the city's most powerful nongovernmental institution is another Mexican-American, Archbishop Patrick Flores, 55, the first His-

Proud of cowboy heritage, San Antonians get a big kick out of two enormous boots decorating local mall.

Photographs by Jose Azel

Newscaster Henry Guerra visits monument to Alamo heroes. At annual ceremony, he recites their names.

Famous Paseo del Rio, or River Walk, is a showcase of shops and cafés on the San Antonio River's banks.

panic in the United States to be named a Roman Catholic bishop. And in Henry Cisneros, 38, San Antonio has one of the first Hispanic mayors of a major American city, and a potential Presidential candidate. "We have the opportunity here," Cisneros says, "to create Hispanics who have developed the American virtues of hard work, discipline and decisiveness while retaining their traditional values of the extended family, deep religious faith and that innate sense of compassion which makes politics creative. There is also the opportunity here for developing a new breed of Anglos who take on the Hispanic qualities of tolerance, compassion and appreciation for human relations. In other words, we have the potential to make 'e pluribus unum' really mean something."

When Mayor Cisneros talks about *mestizaje*, he speaks from personal experience. Prominent among the photographs in his office is a picture of his maternal grandfather, Jose Romulo Munguia y Torres, a self-taught intellectual who, like numerous other Mexican revolutionaries, migrated to San Antonio in the turbulent Twenties and eventually became an influential leader in Hispanic publishing, politics and education—but remained a citizen of Mexico. Henry's father served in World War II and retired as an Army colonel. Young Henry was bright, bookish and disciplined in a military way: at Texas A&M he relished the spartan regimen of the cadet corps and was named a Distinguished Military Graduate. Two years as a White House Fellow gave him a zest for public service, and degrees in urban studies (an MPA from Harvard and a doctorate from George Washington University) provided him with impressive academic credentials. Two other likenesses in Cisneros' office—of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King jr.—symbolize his conviction that Hispanics have no corner on compassion.

If there is a mestizo manner, Cisneros embodies it. Tall (he is six-foot-two), sinewy and graceful, he seldom appears in public in anything other than white shirt, rep tie and pinstriped suit. That manner, together with his determination to attract more and more high-tech industry to the booming city, helped convince San Antonio's Anglo business community in 1981 and '83, and again in '85, that he was the best candidate for mayor. That Cisneros is a mediagenic Hispanic makes him, in Anglo eyes, all the more attractive. But he and his family still live in the same gray, five-room bungalow that his grandfather owned in Prospect Hill, a middle-class neighborhood at the edge of the Hispanics' sprawling West Side barrio.

In reality, San Antonio is more diverse ethnically than terms "Anglo" and "Hispanic" imply. There are vigorous communities of Irish, Italians, Jews, blacks, Greeks and Poles, to name only a few—plus a sturdy strain of Germans whose ancestors established the city's breweries, mills and manufacturing in the late 19th century. The Hispanic community itself is also marbled with diverse ethnic stocks. It includes the descendants of the 15 original Canary Island families sent as colonizers by the King of Spain in 1731, as well as subsequent immigrants from Spain, the Philippines and Central America. But it is the Mexican-Ameri-

A senior writer with Newsweek, *Kenneth Woodward visited San Antonio at Fiesta time and, at last word, was continuing to recover.*

cans, with 53 percent of the population, who give San Antonio its distinctive flavor and cultural pith.

Besides the Alamo, greater San Antonio has four original Spanish missions in various stages of restoration. To visit them is to rediscover the incubator in which the first stage of *mestizaje*—the blending of Indian and Spanish cultures—took form. The core of the city also bears a distinctly Hispanic stamp. From City Hall, one can look directly across to the old Spanish Governor's Palace and down on San Fernando Cathedral, from whose original bell tower Santa Anna directed the Mexican Army's assault on the Alamo five blocks away. One of the main streets is called Dolorosa —the Street of Sorrows—because it commemorates the Spanish massacre of a Mexican rebel army in 1813.

What gives San Antonio its Hispanic flavor is as much a matter of pace as place. Building activity has been nothing less than frenetic in recent years. But when developers decided last spring to move the historic Fairmount Hotel rather than demolish it, San Antonians—Anglos and Hispanics alike—declared an instant fiesta. Thousands gathered along the hotel's six-block path to cheer the movers on. Indeed, in almost any given week, there is a fiesta somewhere in the city or suburbs, and this readiness to pause and enjoy is one of the things that distinguish San Antonio from other major American cities.

"What a lot of visitors fail to notice," says Mike Greenberg, a native of the city and cultural critic for the San Antonio *Express-News*, "is how deeply mixed this society is." In the summertime, for example, Anglos and Hispanics play softball together, stage and attend concerts and dances in the city's parks, and mix unself-consciously in the city's leafy downtown plazas. To judge by the society pages, intermarriage is unexceptional if not yet commonplace. To be sure, the barrio remains a Hispanic place apart, swollen by a steady stream of illegal aliens from Mexico. And like all major cities, San Antonio has bedroom communities of wealthy Anglos. But most of the city's school districts are integrated and, after generations of effort, a Hispanic middle class of prosperous businessmen, lawyers and physicians (25 percent of the city's doctors are Hispanic) is making its presence felt. Along the city's romantic Paseo del Rio, or River Walk, there are watering holes like the Calico Cat and the Kangaroo Court where Hispanic and Anglo artists, intellectuals and journalists gather.

One of the basic bonds between Anglos and Hispanics is their shared passion for Mexican-American food. At his table, Archbishop Flores finds that the tortillas disappear long before the bread, and at breakfast, he notes, "Anglos seem to use more hot sauce on their scrambled eggs than we do." Local historians insist that chili con carne is a San Antonio invention. The white-flour tortilla was invented in San Antonio, as were Fritos, a Tex-Mex snack. During Fiesta, revelers can purchase from street vendors a Taco-Polaco, a

Mayor Cisneros greets beauty queen Annette Wolff of Clear Lakes, Texas, and other royalty at Fiesta.

Spangled with rhinestones, gowns and trains worn by Fiesta queen and court weigh up to 120 pounds each.

Polish sausage which is wrapped in a Mexican tortilla.

The popularity of Hispanic food has, in turn, encouraged related forms of cultural convergence. Mexican-American cuisine is not the kind to make and eat at home—unless, as wealthy Anglo families do, one hires a good live-in Hispanic cook—because proper enchiladas, *cabrito* (roast kid) and other traditional dishes take considerable preparation. As a consequence, San Antonians tend to eat out frequently. (A favorite form of entertainment is to hire a river barge laden with Mexican food and float down the meandering San Antonio River while a mariachi band plays on board.) It is said that San Antonio has more quality Mexican-American restaurants than any other city—and more bars, too, because beer is the essential complement to hot Hispanic food. Thus, at a popular spot like Mi Tierra in El Mercado, the renovated Mexican marketplace, a visitor is likely to encounter high school girls in prom dresses, truck drivers in rolled-up shirt sleeves, gentry from the upscale northern suburbs and produce vendors all eating side by side.

It would be difficult to overestimate the impact of Mexico on the lives of San Antonians, but that impact varies dramatically according to social class. For affluent Anglos and Hispanics, Mexico is the vacation land of choice; Mexico City is less than two hours away by air and the wealthy regularly spend time there shopping, perfecting their Spanish and furnishing their homes with paintings, woodwork, pottery and sculpture. "Mexican folk art is so ravishing," says John

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"King of the People" Carlos Madrid, public-spirited developer, welcomes one of his subjects to the Fiesta.

Dr. Raul Gaona, internist and president of Charro Association, buckles up for a *charreada*, or rodeo.

Leeper. "Almost everyone goes through a phase of collecting it." This passion for Mexican art is reflected in the collections at the San Antonio Museum of Art, which moved recently into a cleverly renovated old brewery. The museum's board is dominated by patrician Anglo families, but the accent is on Latin American work from pre-Columbian to contemporary. "Fifty percent of our customers are of Hispanic heritage," estimates Helmuth J. Naumer, a museum official, "so we see to it that at least some of our dozen annual exhibits are of Latin art." All of the museum's paintings carry bilingual titles.

As if the border didn't exist

But for the poor of San Antonio's barrio, the city's museums, symphony and other centers of high culture represent an alien world that they rarely penetrate. Their connection to the Mexican homeland is more direct. The barrio receives a steady stream of immigrants from Mexico and Central America looking for work. Many crisscross the border regularly, as if it didn't exist. To some older Hispanics, in fact, the border is just a troublesome fiction dividing the mother country from the part of Mexico the Anglos stole a century and a half ago. "We didn't cross the border," one man explains, "the border crossed us."

The one institution that unites Hispanics on both sides of the border is the Roman Catholic Church. And in San Antonio's Archbishop Flores, a warm and discerning churchman, Hispanics have a shepherd who understands rejection. His own Anglo parish priest tried to discourage Flores from entering the seminary. When he first arrived in San Antonio as an assistant bishop and pastor of a West Side parish, Flores nearly left the parish because he could not stand the stench from the tanning factories that polluted the Hispanic neighborhood where he lived. Instead, he decided to stay and attempt to solve the problem. Flores vigorously promoted within the archdiocese two important activist organizations. One is Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS), a movement that uses the city's Hispanic parishes as a base for organizing barrio neighborhoods into a potent political force. Using confrontational tactics like those pioneered in the 1940s by the late community organizer Saul Alinsky, COPS has won local battles over housing and street repairs; now it is tackling such statewide issues as public education and health care. The other is the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC), directed by Father Virgil Elizondo, a San Antonian with a worldwide reputation for his work in liberation theology. Under Elizondo's direction, the Center has become a think tank where church leaders from around

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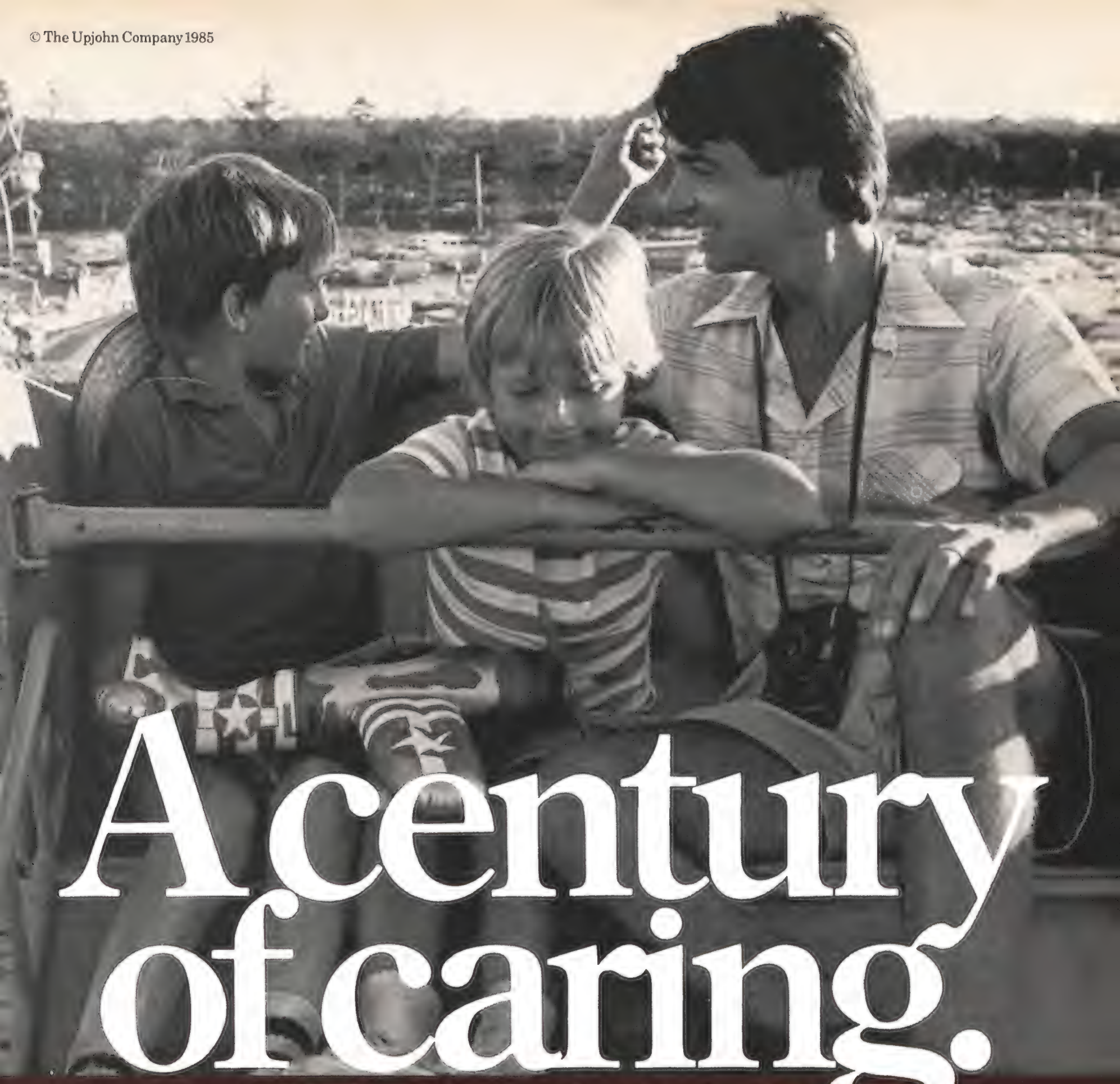

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the world meet with Mexican-American leaders in the United States to consider how the church can help Hispanics here.

For Father Virgil, the process of *mestizaje* is central to the Mexican-American's religious experience. He sees in the Hispanics' most revered icon, the Virgin of Guadalupe, a powerful symbol of the mixing of ancient Indian culture and Spanish Catholicism. "The promise inherent in the Virgin's presence is that out of this *mestizaje* experience will come a new people, a mixed race," he says. "And that is what is happening here in San Antonio. Both Anglo and Hispanic are gradually becoming a new 'us.' " As rector of the San Fernando Cathedral, Father Virgil has moved that process along. On Sundays, mariachi masses can be heard along with the standard English-language liturgies, and the sermons alternate unself-consciously between Spanish and English, the way most Hispanics talk on the street.

Each spring, the two cultures of San Antonio celebrate the Fiesta, ten days of civic revelry for which the city seems to spend the rest of the year preparing. Women turn out in multicolored Mexican dresses, men don their *guayaberas,* and the entire downtown area becomes one vast cantina. Flowered barges—some bearing a young Fiesta princess—wind through the narrow river loop while partygoers salute them with tall drinks and appreciative *Olés!* Upward of 40,000 San Antonians crowd into La Villita, the old cobblestoned quarter now restored to boutique chicness, where vendors sell hot and spicy dishes from steaming kettles. There is dancing to jazz and rock, as well as traveling bands of mariachis with their guitars and trumpets. More relaxed than New Orleans' raucous Mardi Gras, Fiesta exudes the down-home feeling of a small town where neighbors still know how to lock arms and celebrate their communal past and present.

For more than 60 years, the reigning royalty of Fiesta—King Antonio, the Queen and her court—have been chosen from within the old-line Anglo families. Of late, however, the city's non-Anglo population has enthroned its own king: the Rey Feo or Ugly King, really "King of the People," who wins his crown by raising the most scholarship money for the League of United Latin American Citizens. Although Scots, Irishmen and Lebanese have been Rey Feo, the crown

A pair of intrepid young bikers cavorts in front of a barrio mural depicting Aztec warriors. There are 115 exterior murals in San Antonio. Most of them, like this one painted by teenagers, are in housing projects.

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Along a busy barrio street, one of San Antonio's numerous Mexican restaurants gives off a vivid glow.

is now seen as symbolizing the emergence of Hispanics in the real world outside of the Fiesta's imaginary realms. Indeed, a turning point occurred in 1981 when, for the first time, the Rey Feo was accorded equal status to King Antonio during Fiesta. Significantly, that Fiesta was also the first at which King Antonio received the key to the city from a Hispanic mayor—Cisneros. At a symbolic moment during last year's Fiesta, the dark-haired wife of the Rey Feo reached out at a party and hugged the Anglo wife of King Antonio, kissing her on the cheek. "I just decided it was time I greeted her like Hispanics do," recalls Evangelina Guerrero Flores, the beautiful wife of a successful restaurateur. "After that, we hugged whenever we met."

Stop any San Antonian on the street for directions, it is said, and you will get a history lesson in response. Not surprisingly, however, Anglos and Hispanics sometimes give quite different accounts of their city's past. State law has long required every school to teach the history of Texas and, for at least a century, the official version reflected only the Anglo perspective. Henry Guerra, who along with his writer-wife, Mary Ann, is among the keenest local historians, recalls that the first page of the history book he studied introduced Christopher Columbus as the discoverer of America. The second page mentioned that the Spanish had explored the Southwest and established missions there. The third page celebrated Stephen Austin as the Father of Texas and from that point, says Guerra, "the history of Texas began."

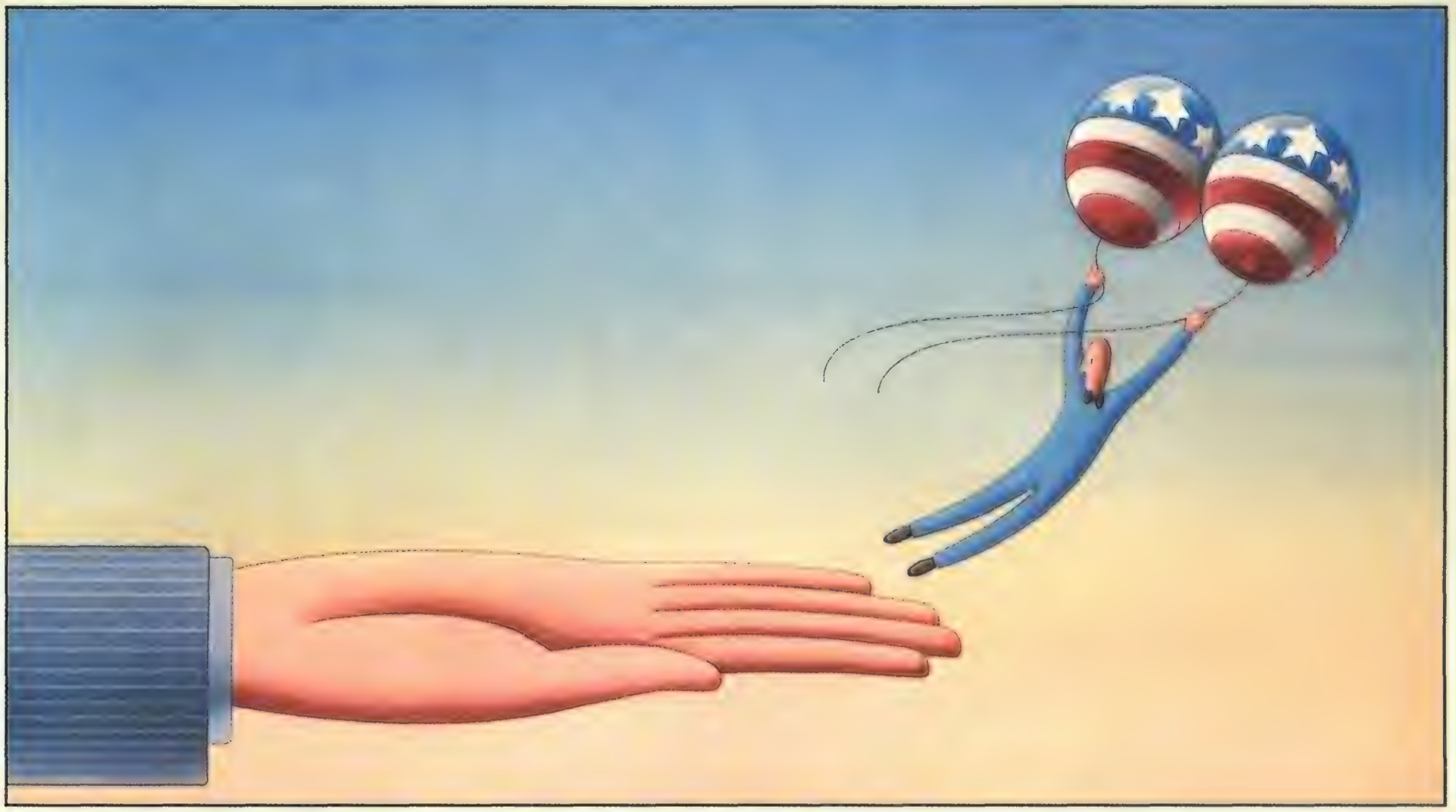
It was only after San Antonians started preparations for the Texas centennial in 1936 that the city's Hispanic forefathers began to receive their due. Guerra remembers that moment vividly. "Only 188 men fought in the Alamo, but to hear people in San Antonio talk you'd have thought everyone had had an ancestor inside the walls," he says. "So folks with names like Smith began searching their family trees for early Texas heroes, and what they found were a lot of great-grandmas with Mexican surnames." In other words, they discovered that they, too, were mestizos.

As some Mexican-Americans recite their history, Texas belonged to their ancestors until Anglo settlers robbed them of their land. But as a matter of strict historical fact, Texas belonged to Spain much longer than it did to Mexico or has to the United States. And during that long period (1519 to 1821), the true Texan was either Spanish or Indian or, more often, a mixture. The name "Texas" itself is derived from the Indian word *tejas*, meaning friend, which is how the Spanish heard the Indians address each other.

San Antonio began in 1718 as a Spanish mission and military post, chosen because of the water resources of the San Antonio River. By 1821, when Stephen Austin and the first wave of Anglo settlers arrived in Texas, San Antonio was firmly established as the northernmost city of Mexico. Hispanics played prominent roles in the Texas Revolution against Mexico in 1836 and some were leaders of the independent Texas Republic. But by 1850, five years after Texas joined the Union, the city's institutions were largely in the hands of non-Hispanic settlers and by 1870, Spanish-speaking citizens were a numerical minority.

The modern history of San Antonio's twin cultures really began with the new wave of immigrants who fled Mexico during the Revolution of 1910. Most were very poor and illiterate peasants. Some were professional organizers for the *syndicatos* (labor unions), whose efforts to unionize farm workers and miners further antagonized the free-enterprising Anglo establishment. Throughout the middle decades of this century, San Antonio remained a city where the two cultures were essentially segregated. Except for U.S. military installations like Kelly Air Force Base, which provided Hispanics with the economic base for developing a middle class, Mexican-Americans generally encoun-

On a hot afternoon, cowboy Edward Gutierrez leads horses out of the sun into the cool of a local bar.



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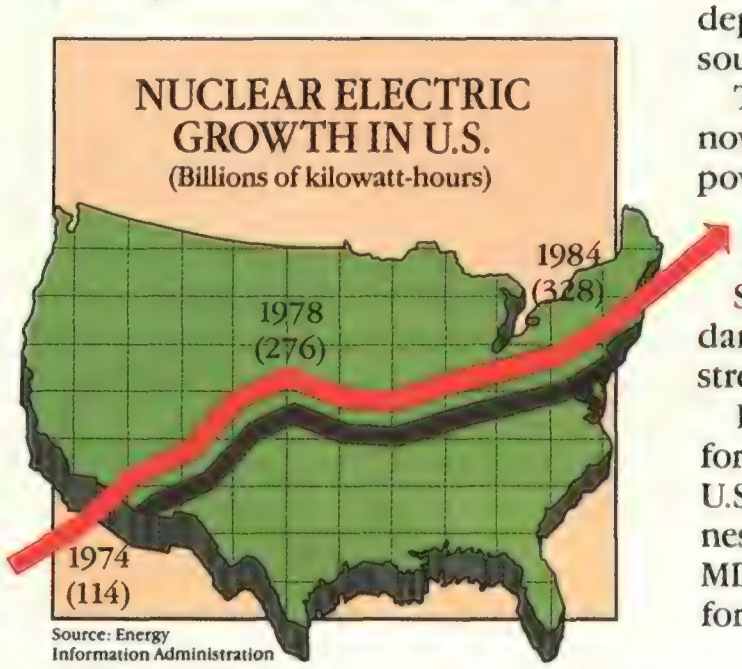

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tered discrimination in jobs, housing and education. Texas law forbade students to speak Spanish in public schools. Restrictive covenants prevented Hispanics from living in certain parts of the city. Conditions in the barrio so resembled the slums of South America that the Peace Corps used it as a training ground in the 1960s. Apart from U.S. Congressman Henry B. Gonzalez, Mexican-Americans were effectively locked out of politics until 1971, when the courts decreed that the ten-member city council must be elected by district. In 1975, a "majority of minorities"—five Hispanics plus one black—won council seats. At that point, the merging of the two cultures was no longer limited to history, cuisine, music and the arts. The focus shifted to jobs, taxes and city services.

Tom Frost, the fourth generation of his family to head the Frost National Bank, was in many ways perfectly typecast to defend the interests of San Antonio's Establishment during the Hispanic protests. Lanky and aristocratic, he belongs to the exclusive clubs, owns a small ranch, is well-connected in Washington, speaks fluent Spanish, knows Mexico intimately and takes special pride in his great-grandfather, who was a Texas Ranger and a colonel in the Confederate Army. But Frost, it turned out, was not disposed to play the role of an Anglo heavy.

Like other leaders of the business community, Frost feared that Chicano militancy would scare new industry away from San Antonio. He also feared that the city's political realignment would degenerate into "competition between the haves and have-nots." To prevent this, Frost and other key Anglo leaders backed Cisneros for mayor in 1981 against a candidate from their own milieu, a millionaire businessman who had once reigned as King Antonio. For his part, Cisneros assured the businessmen that he would give the city "stability." Today, Frost pronounces himself very pleased with the way the arrangement has turned out. He has a good working relationship with COPS leadership and, at times, talks like an urban populist. "What we have now in San Antonio is a participatory democracy," he says. "The reason San Antonio works is that the people here love their city and are going to make it work."

Another reason is that Cisneros has pursued a policy of dialogue at all costs. Major parties to that dialogue include Anglo real-estate developers and other representatives of "new money" in the city; Hispanic groups such as COPS; and the San Antonio Conservation Society, a savvy civic watchdog group run predominantly by volunteers. One of the mayor's most important diplomatic successes occurred when all sides agreed to support a multimillion-dollar urban-renewal project that will not only add new jobs but also provide low-cost housing for the Hispanic poor the project has displaced. "As growth occurs, my job is to see that it helps those who have been outside the economic mainstream," says Cisneros. The mayor is as good as his word. For a city with such a huge minority population,

Texas-size armadillo looms over Market Square, where Anglos and Hispanics savor Mexican specialties.

San Antonio's unemployment rate is surprisingly low (five percent last year) and its municipal bond credit rating (AA-Plus) is consistently high.

San Antonio's progress toward a mestizo culture has not been achieved without great stress for many Hispanics. "There are two world views fighting for supremacy in our souls," says Dr. Roberto Jimenez, who taught psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School for five years and now has a family practice in the city. "One is the Anglo's epic vision in which life is the unfolding saga of humankind's progressive triumph over evil. The other is the Hispanic's tragic sense of life, in which suffering plays a central ennobling role." Jimenez finds these two cultural views clashing in many of the Anglo-Hispanic families who come to him for help. But he believes that the symbiosis of the two cultures will come. And he has returned home, to San Antonio, to help nurture the process.

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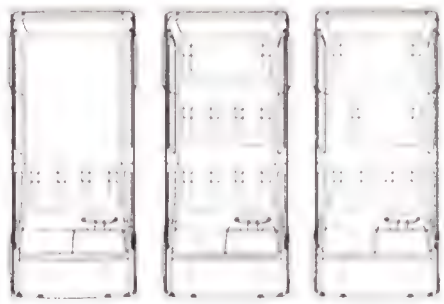

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V-6 engine power option	**2.8L V-6**	NONE
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Extra driver legroom	**41.4 in.**	38.3 in.
Max. opt. trailer towing capacity†	**4900 lbs.**	2000 lbs.
Longer wheelbase, smooth ride	**119 in.**	112 in.

† Reduced by passenger and cargo weight in tow vehicle.
**Based on SAE Standard V-16.

FORD AEROSTAR

Boyish Reagan, 29 in 1940, portrayed Gipp. He stood six feet, weighed 180, had played guard in college.

By James A. Cox

Was 'the Gipper' really for real? You can bet he was

On and off the field, Notre Dame's fabled footballer was a hard-charger—in ways undreamed of in Ronald Reagan's 1940 film

The year is 1916. On a brisk autumn afternoon, in an out-of-the-way corner of a practice field at a small Midwestern university, a rangy young man is playing catch with a friend. The ball they are tossing back and forth is out of season—a baseball. Suddenly the ball that is in *season—a football—comes flying over the fence from the gridiron across the way, where the school's varsity eleven is practicing. It hits the young man in the head and caroms away. Unhurt, but somewhat annoyed, he retrieves the bouncing pigskin and boots it back—a high, soaring kick that travels almost 70 yards in the air. On the other side of the field an assistant coach watches the flight of the ball, whistles in awe and races across the greensward, shouting as he runs, "Hey, you! You with the baseball! What's your name?"*

"Gipp," comes the laconic answer.

"Where you from?"

"Michigan."

"Play high school football?"

"Nope."

"Well, I think you'll make a football player," says the assistant coach. "Come out tomorrow. We'll suit you up and see what you can do."

The young man shrugs. "I don't know," he says vaguely. "Don't particularly care for football."

And so begins a legend—or will a few days later, when George Gipp, for reasons known only to him, decides to accept Knute Rockne's invitation.

It is an oft-told tale, one version of a classic sports story that for years used to quicken the pulse and

dampen the eyes of Notre Dame fanatics and small boys of all ages everywhere. Then, as is the fate of most legends, it began gathering dust in the nation's memory attic.

This particular legend had something else going for it however, a 1940 film that still plays every now and then on late-night television. Many a legend can boast an old movie devoted to it, but this one has lately been reaping the benefits of a curious casting coincidence. Which is why history-minded newspaper columnists and TV commentators sometimes refer to the man in the White House as "the Gipper," apparently assuming that the reading/listening public understands the significance of the nickname.

In a husky whisper, a famous plea

And a lot of us think we do. After all, haven't we bent solicitously over that hospital bed with good old Pat O'Brien while a young Ronald Reagan, weak and pain-racked, huskily whispers what was to become the most famous sports plea of all time?

That's the stuff of trivia games. What of the *real* George Gipp? Was he really an all-American boy, the stuff of legend? You bet he was. Then again, he wasn't, at least not exactly. For in his sporting life there is another classic scene not known to sentimental film fans:

It is halftime at the Notre Dame-Army game of 1920. Army is ahead and Rockne is giving one of his famous fight speeches. At the end every player is up, breathing fire, except Gipp, who lounges in the doorway looking bored. "I don't suppose you have the slightest interest in this game," the emotional Rockne snarls at him.

"You're wrong there, Rock," Gipp answers. "I've got 400 on this game, and I don't intend to blow it."

He was born on February 18, 1895, in Laurium, Michigan, up in Lake Superior copper-ore country. He starred in basketball at the local Y—his dismal academic record made him ineligible for high school competition—but otherwise showed little ambition. Like Rockne, the flat-nosed, balding Norwegian Notre Dame coach with the buzz-saw voice, an ex-all-American himself, who put the Fighting Irish on the national football map, Gipp was late getting to college. It tells you something about the man that he was 21 when he finally enrolled—assured by a Notre Dame grad and ardent sports fan that a baseball scholarship could be his for the asking—having been content to spend the previous three years in construction work and driving a taxi in Laurium.

He played in an amateur baseball league and excelled at other games—notably pool, poker and dice—for fun and profit. These are not activities normally associated with the sons of church deacons, but George Gipp once won a gold watch for ballroom dancing.

Stalwart Gipper at 25 in 1920 was six feet, weighed 180, had been construction worker before Notre Dame.

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Defending against archrival Nebraska, Gipp (arrow) knifes in to assist on tackle. His pinpoint passes led the Irish to victory, 14 to 9.

A few days after reporting for football, he had established a few things about himself. Physically, at six feet and 180 pounds, wearing the sturdy canvas-and-moleskin football uniform of the time, he could run the 100-yard dash in 10.1 seconds, throw pinpoint passes half the length of the field and boom off punts of 60 yards or more. Socially, he was a modest fellow with few close friends, easygoing to the point of indifference. Personally, he was totally untamed, a potential star to whom practice was a bore, discipline something to be ignored.

His first out-of-town game with the freshman team, against Western State Normal of Michigan, set the tone.

Playing halfback Gipp piles up yardage, but the score is 7-7 as the fourth quarter grinds down. Fourth down, with only a couple of minutes to go, the Irish have the ball. The quarterback calls punt formation—kick away and play for a tie. Gipp demurs. He wants to try a field goal. The quarterback, the field general, looks at him as he would at a crazy man. From where the kicker will stand to the opposing goalpost, which in those days was on the goal line, is a distance of more than 60 yards. "Punt," orders the quarterback.

The ball is snapped. Gipp drops it end-first to the ground, gets a perfect rebound and booms the ball through the uprights for a 62-yard field goal that wins the game (and an enduring place in the record book).

"This Frank Merriwell finish was so poetically right," Rockne rhapsodized later, "that I thought Gipp was going to make a habit of being too good to be true."

A few days before the Army game that year, Gipp was put on the scrub team working against the varsity and told to imitate the cutback, stutter-step running of Elmer Oliphant, Army's great all-America halfback. Gipp played Oliphant so well that he ran the varsity ragged. There was only one problem with the performance, Rockne pointed out later: "In the Army game that Saturday, Elmer Oliphant gave a perfect imitation of George Gipp—and whipped us."

In the spring of his freshman year, Gipp tried out for the Notre Dame baseball team and made it as an outfielder. He played only one game, but turned in a memorable performance: ignoring the signal to bunt, he blasted the ball over the fence for a home run. Why, the manager demanded, hadn't he followed the signals? "Because it's too hot to be running around the bases after a bunt," Gipp explained. A couple of teammates snickered. Then they realized that he wasn't joking. Next day he turned in his uniform.

That season was both the beginning and the end of Gipp's Notre Dame baseball career. It may have been because of his financial situation. He was waiting tables in the dining room for board and lodging, and picking up extra cash by playing in nearby semipro and industrial baseball leagues. (In 1919, he and several teammates played for money in a football game in Rockford, Illinois. Fortunately, no one at Notre Dame found out.) And he picked up further spare cash by frequenting the pool halls and other low joints of South Bend. A hangout called Hullie and Mike's became his second home, and he was a regular at the Oliver and LaSalle Hotels, where he took on some of the sharpest pool hustlers and cardsharps on the Chicago circuit.

"I'm the finest free-lance gambler ever to attend Notre Dame," he once said, and what would have been a boast coming from anyone else was, for him, a mere statement of fact. Arthur (Dutch) Bergman, his roommate, explained: "Nobody around South Bend could beat him at faro, shooting pool, billiards, poker or bridge. He studied the percentages in dice rolling and could fade those

Generally devil-may-care, Gipp shows the intensity he brought to football.

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Except for Gipp (center) and two others including pal Hunk Anderson (far right), the Notre Dame team arrived at West Point in 1919 wearing sober fedoras.

bones in a way that had the professionals dizzy. At three-pocket pool, he was the terror of the . . . parlors."

He never gambled for money with other students, though, and his crap-shooting skills helped pay the way through Notre Dame for more than a few of his college friends. Said Bergman: "I've seen him win $500 in a crap game and then spend his winnings buying meals for destitute families. No wonder he was idolized by the South Bend townies."

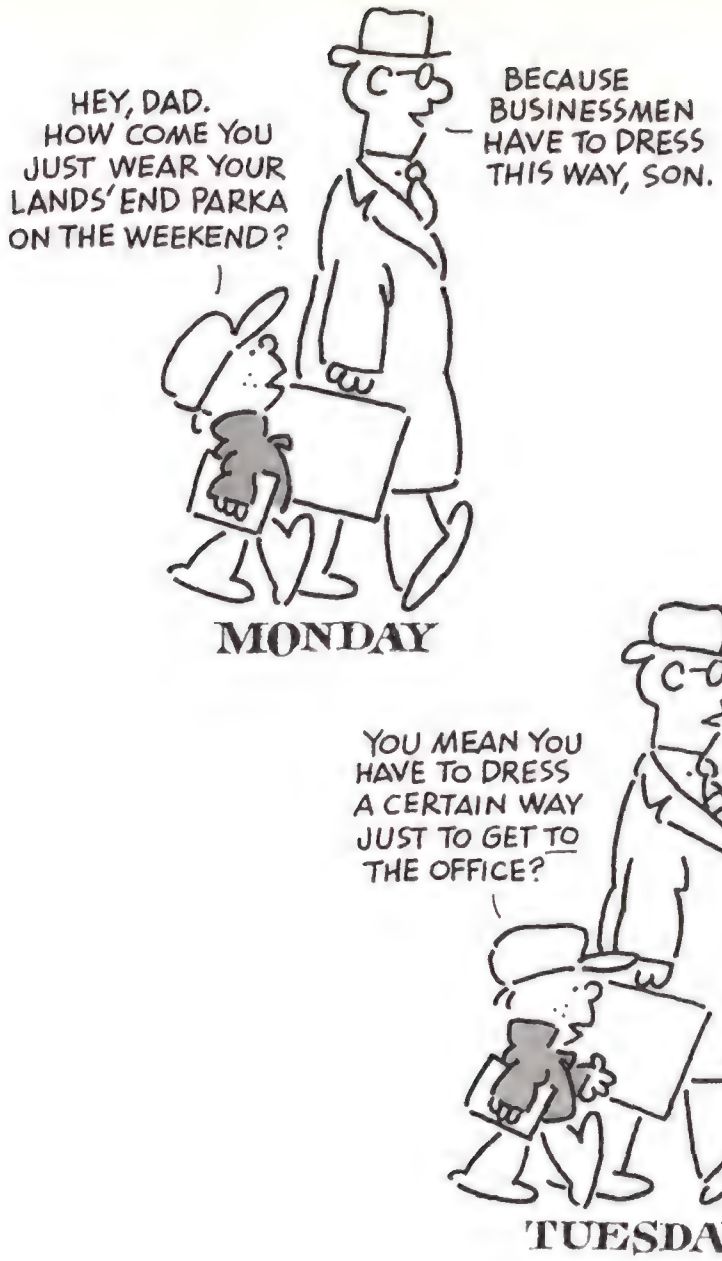
Bergman also recalls that Gipp scoffed at curfew hours, drank like a fish, smoked cigarettes and sometimes stayed up all night, carousing or playing cards. The morning of the 1920 homecoming game with Purdue, Walter O'Keefe, then of the South Bend *News-Times*, saw him stumble out of the elevator in the lobby of the Oliver Hotel, "unshaven . . . sleepy-eyed . . . downright soggy. I gave him hell for staying up all night." Gipp assured O'Keefe he was all right. In the game's second quarter, he scored with an 80-yard touchdown and racked up 129 yards in rushing.

In 1919 Rockne's high hopes seemed to be dashed when Gipp cut so many classes that he was bounced out of school. A splendid legend has it that Gipp was given an oral exam by the law faculty ("a helluva stiff test," one professor later remembered) and somehow aced it, nobody knows how. But in fact the celebrated exam never took place. Instead, the alums, aghast at the thought of a team without Gipp, deluged the college with complaints. (Gipp, meanwhile, signed on as house player at Hullie and Mike's.) The blitz worked: the university reinstated Rockne's star.

Thereafter Gipp came to practice when he chose, doing what he felt like doing, for the most part. But no teammate ever complained to Rockne about favoritism. Like Rockne, they recognized him as some kind of odd genius who performed superlatively under game conditions, but otherwise just couldn't be bothered.

Even in a game, wrote Harry Stuhldreher of Notre Dame's famed Four Horsemen, who came along a few years later, Gipp "only got interested when Notre Dame was up against it." In 1919, against Army at West Point, Gipp, despite injuries from playing Indiana the week before, showed teammates what he could do when the team was in trouble. After Army upped its lead to 6-0, Gipp, sometimes

The author wrote on boxer John L. Sullivan in the December 1984 issue.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with three Army players clinging to various parts of his anatomy, reeled off yardage on the ground, then completed a long pass to the Army 10-yard line, and sliced off tackle for a touchdown.

The Irish went on to beat Army that day and finished the season with a 9-0 record, earning national recognition as the champions of the West. By now Gipp was being compared —favorably—with the legendary Jim Thorpe as a triple-threat back. His audacity, flamboyance and brazen generalship on the field had the fans screaming, opposing coaches talking to themselves, and sportswriters straining for descriptive labels. Among them "The Wild Horse of Notre Dame," "Rockne's Golden Boy" and "Notre Dame's Cool Gambler." The latter was most apt, since Gipp was the team's bookie.

As Notre Dame player in 1913, Rockne had hapless look but was a smashing end.

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Betting was common in college football at the time. Wagers, for example between Army and Notre Dame, were often made on the eve of a game when, as was the custom, the two teams met for dinner. Players bet on their own team, or on themselves as individuals, an end claiming he would catch a certain number of passes next day, a back betting he would plunge for so many yards.

The 1920 season established George Gipp as "immortal." And once again Army was the big test for him as well as for the Irish. Hotshot sportswriters from all the big Eastern papers were on hand at West Point to see the phenom from the Midwest in action. Gipp, who showed no interest in personal publicity and never bothered to read his press notices, turned down all requests for interviews.

If the writers didn't get an interview, they certainly got a story. Before the game, Gipp and Red Reeder of the Cadets went head to head in a field-goal-kicking exhibition. Reeder dropped out at the 40-yard line. Gipp, carrying four balls, ambled to midfield. He drop-kicked two of the balls through one set of goalposts, then turned and repeated the feat in the opposite direction. The sportswriters scribbled furiously.

The excitement continued into the game. Despite heroics by Gipp, Army led 17-14 at the end of the half. And it was in the locker room between halves that Rockne, somewhat more vocal about the team's performance, after firing up every other player, turned to the apparently bored Gipp, challenged him and heard that he had $400 riding on the game and didn't intend to lose it.

It was no idle boast. By the time he was through, Gipp had piled up 385 yards—more than the entire Army team—and led the Irish to a 27-17 comeback victory, with a performance again worthy of dramatic legend. Even the stodgy *New York Times* lost all restraint in recounting his exploits. "A lithe-limbed Hoosier foot-

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On road trips, 1919 Irish had only eight substitutes, but boasted six future all-Americans including Gipp. Rockne is in second row, at left.

ball player named George Gipp galloped wild through the Army on the plains here this afternoon, giving a performance which was more like an antelope than a human being. . . . He was here, there and everywhere, and the Army tacklers slipped off him like water off a duck's back." The apex of these heroics was Gipp's runback of an Army kickoff, 48 yards through the whole Cadet team, followed by a pair of pinpoint passes, setting up a short-yardage, winning touchdown.

"I have never seen an athlete get the acclamation Gipp received when he walked off the field that day," recalled Irish end Roger Kiley. "He was tired and pale and his face was a little bloody, and the crowd at West Point stood up and nobody applauded. It was thrilling—awed silence."

Now there were only four games left in the season, and Rockne figured that a sweep after beating Army would give the Irish a fair shot at the national championship. Purdue went down as expected, 28-0, but against Indiana the following week disaster struck: Gipp suffered a dislocated shoulder and had to be taken out. The Hoosiers shot into a 10-0 lead, which they held into the fourth quarter. The Irish caught fire, then stalled on the Indiana 2-yard line. Gipp, heavily bandaged, threw off the blanket he was wearing on the bench, shouted to Rockne "I'm going in!" and raced onto the field. Rockne roared at him to come back, but the crowd roared louder in welcome.

On the second play Gipp rammed into the end zone for a touchdown, then kicked the extra point. Indiana 10, Notre Dame 7. A few minutes later, the Irish had the ball again, but time was running out. Rockne had got Gipp off the field while his teammates worked the ball down to the Indiana 15-yard line. He rushed off the bench for the next play: it was another Gipper classic. As he went back for the dropkick that would tie the game, and as the Hoosiers stormed in to block it, Gipp tossed the ball over their heads to end Eddie Anderson, on the Indiana 1-yard line. The

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clock was clicking down, the crowd was delirious. On the next play the whole Indiana team seemed to converge on Gipp as he smashed off tackle. Gipp didn't have the ball. It was nestled in the arms of quarterback Joe Brandy, who danced over the line for the winning touchdown.

The team left for South Bend on Sunday, but George traveled on to Chicago. He had promised a former teammate, now a prep-school coach, that he would give his students some pointers on drop-kicking. During this training session, with an icy wind blowing off Lake Michigan, he was aching all over and felt a cold and sore throat coming on.

Back in South Bend he took to his bed. Friday, Rockne visited him at the dorm and asked his star player to leave that night for a game against Northwestern. The coach assured the ailing Gipp that he planned to use him only in a kicking situation.

Gipp sat huddled on the bench. In the fourth quarter, with the game well in hand, Rockne gave in to the

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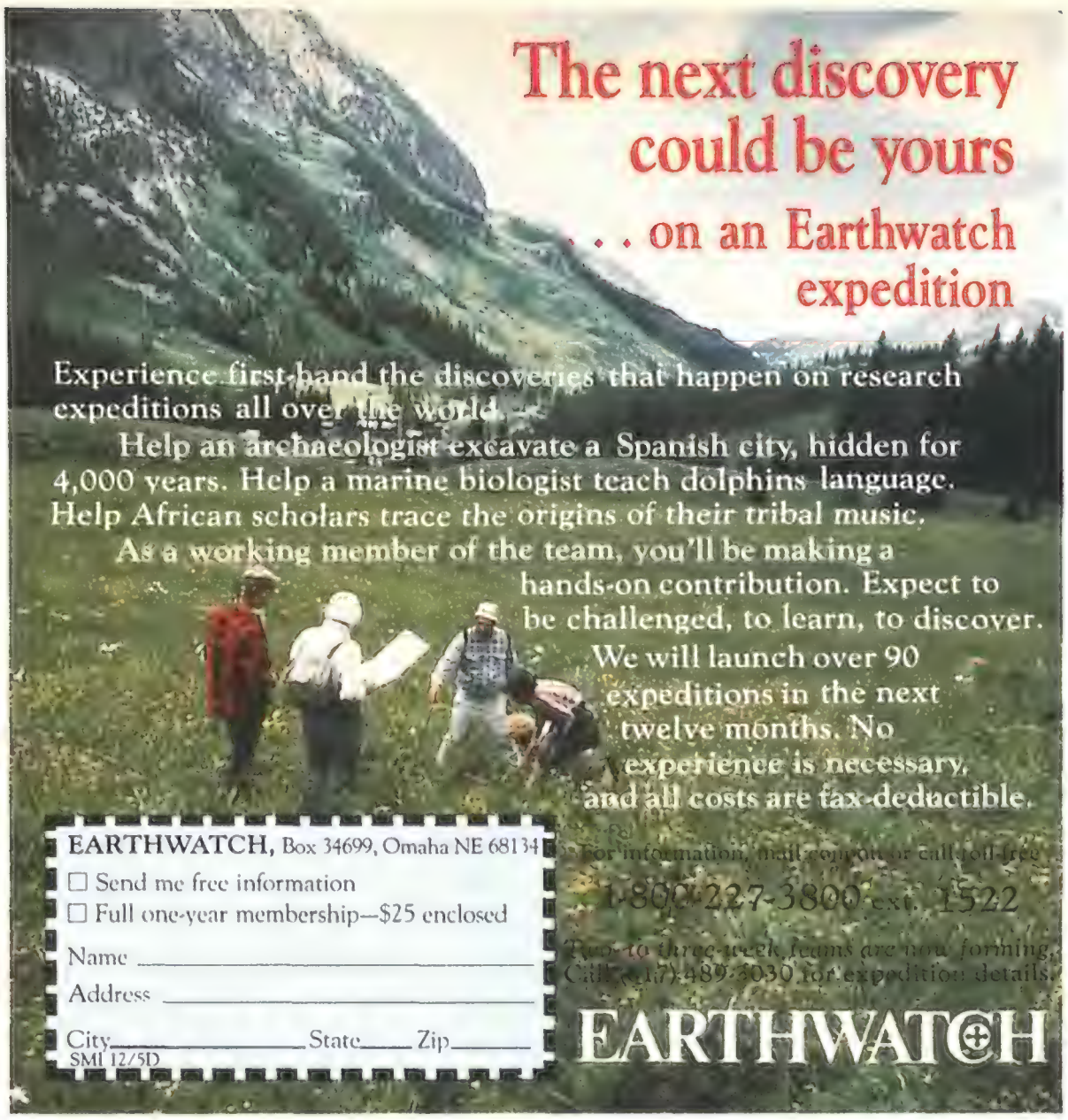
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Backed by intent female fan, Gipp waits to go back into the game.

clamor of the Irish fans and sent Gipp in for a few plays. Shivering with fever, aching from his injuries, he maintained his flair for the dramatic to the end. His last play was a 55-yard pass to halfback Norm Barry for a touchdown.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 25, the Irish beat Michigan State 25-0, to complete their second successive all-winning season. But Gipp wasn't there to enjoy the celebration. He was in St. Joseph's Hospital in South Bend. By November 30, he had developed pneumonia and a strep throat: his condition was critical. There were no miracle drugs in those days; strep was often fatal. So was pneumonia.

As his condition worsened, Rockne tried to cheer him with the news that Walter Camp had named him to his all-America team and had called him the year's outstanding back. And not only that. The Chicago Cubs had offered him a baseball contract. Gipp opened his eyes for a moment and said, "Well, that's jake, Rock."

On December 13, 1920, South Bend townies went about their pursuits solemnly. On campus, Sacred Heart Church was jammed with students praying for a miracle, while Gipp's mother, brother and sister kept vigil at his bedside with Rockne.

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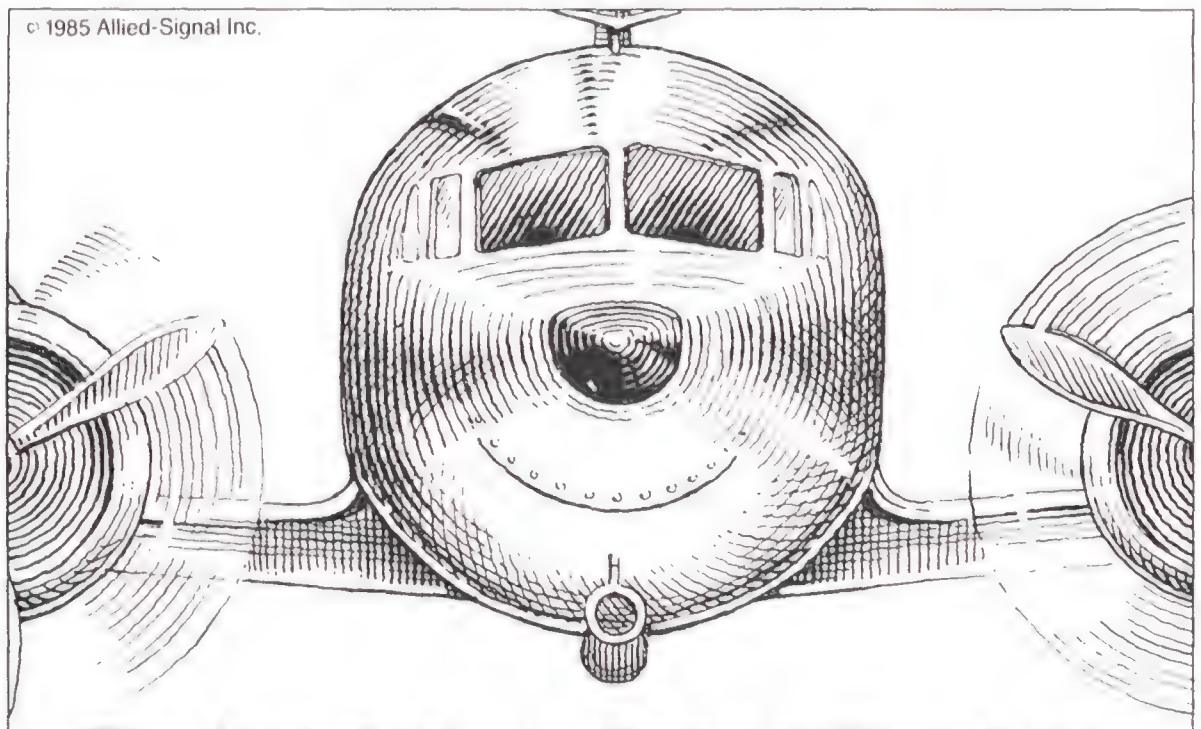
Twilight crept into the room. "It's tough to go," someone said.

"What's tough about it?" Gipp said weakly. "I'm not afraid." He turned to Rockne, his eyes unnaturally bright in his gaunt face. "I've got to go, Rock," he whispered. "It's all right. Sometime, Rock, when the team is up against it, when things are going wrong and the breaks are beating the boys—tell them to go in there with all they've got and win just one for the Gipper."

As the night wore on, Gipp lapsed into a coma; last rites were administered. At 3:30 in the morning, in downtown South Bend, the lights of the Oliver Hotel were dimmed and then flicked off and on, telling the regulars at the dice and poker tables that the Gipper was gone.

That's the story of George Gipp. Much of it sounds like *Boy's Life* inspirational fiction. But nobody seriously questions it, except maybe that last scene in the hospital—and Gipp's last words. Too corny, they say. Totally unlike Gipp, who would have been more likely to ask Rock to put a bet down for him someday when the Irish were a sure thing. Rockne, they

The late Pat O'Brien (as Rockne) huddles on sidelines with the Gipper.



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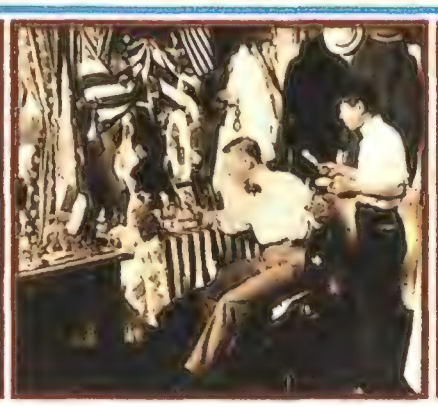

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Impersonating Gipp's punting in publicity for film *Knute Rockne: All-American*, Reagan grins, spreads arms wide.

Gipp spun arms close to body after punt. As dropkicker, he once made a record-breaking 62-yard field goal.

said, who had converted to Catholicism, owed one to the confessional.

Rockne, however, always insisted that he was reporting Gipp's dying words verbatim, and left guard Hunk Anderson claimed that a sobbing Rockne told him about it a few minutes after Gipp died. There probably would have been no problem if the matter had rested there. But eight years later there came a time when the team was up against it, when things were going wrong and the breaks were beating the boys. . . .

Yankee Stadium, New York City, November 12, 1928: the stands trembled as nearly 80,000 people tried to jam into a structure built to hold 75,000. All the Damon Runyon characters were there—politicians, movie stars, Army brass, gangsters and their painted molls, the rich and the famous and the notorious. One section was solid with the gray of Cadets in dress uniform. Elsewhere, waves of everyday football fans, legions of Notre Dame alumni and hordes of press photographers were immortalizing the scene.

In the locker room, the Notre Dame players silently went through the routine of suiting up and getting taped. As they approached the stadium that morning, Irish cops had greeted them on every corner with cries of "Beat Army!" But this was not, by Rockne's standards, a strong Notre Dame team. Army, on the other hand, had rolled undefeated toward the national championship. To the locker-room visitors streaming in and out, the players seemed subdued, almost spiritless.

They came to life as the game started, however, fighting tooth and nail and surprising everyone by holding Army to a scoreless tie at the half. But could they keep it up for two more grueling quarters? The experts in the press box assured each other it was only a matter of time before Army's superior manpower and awesome attack would break the back of the Irish resistance. They didn't know

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what was happening down in the Notre Dame locker room, where Rockne had just walked in. (The film version has an ailing coach enter in a wheelchair.)

The team manager is still wiping the sweat and grime from the players' faces when Rockne arrives. "Boys," he says in a low, serious voice, "I want to tell you a story. I never thought I'd have to tell it, but the time has come."

The players clump over, their cleats scraping on the concrete floor. Rockne starts to talk. His voice is soft, as right tackle Ted Twomey remembers it, almost pleading, the harsh staccato that is the Rockne trademark gone. He leans over a rubbing table, speaking of George Gipp, describing how he was at Gipp's bedside in the hospital, how Gipp was passing away right in front of his eyes. And how Gipp motioned feebly to him and said, "Rock, can you hear me?"

Now he bends his head a little closer to the rubbing table, and the moment is so real that Twomey can see Gipp lying there, dying, can hear him speak, falteringly, talking through Rockne. "I've got to go, Rock. It's all right, I'm not afraid. . . ."

When it's all over, Rockne straightens and studies his players. Everyone is sobbing. "All right, boys," he says quietly. "This is the game. Let's get one for the Gipper."

For an instant, there is an unearthly silence in the room. Then the walls echo a mighty roar as the emotion-charged football players almost tear the locker-room door off its hinges in their eagerness to get out on the field.

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More film publicity: here Rockne exhorts downcast team in locker room during fateful half in which he asked them to "go out and win one for the Gipper."

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Book reviews

Gold Seeker: Adventures of a Belgian Argonaut during the Gold Rush Years
Jean-Nicolas Perlot
Translated by Helen Harding Bretnor
Edited and with an introduction by Howard R. Lamar
Yale University Press, $29.95

Jean-Nicolas Perlot, a restless young man from Herbeumont, set off for Paris in 1845 to make his way in a world more promising and less constricting than his native village in southern Belgium. Three years later, when *Gold Seeker* begins, he had settled into a job as a linen-draper's assistant, but the economic depression after the Revolution of 1848 threatened his position and news of gold in California excited his imagination.

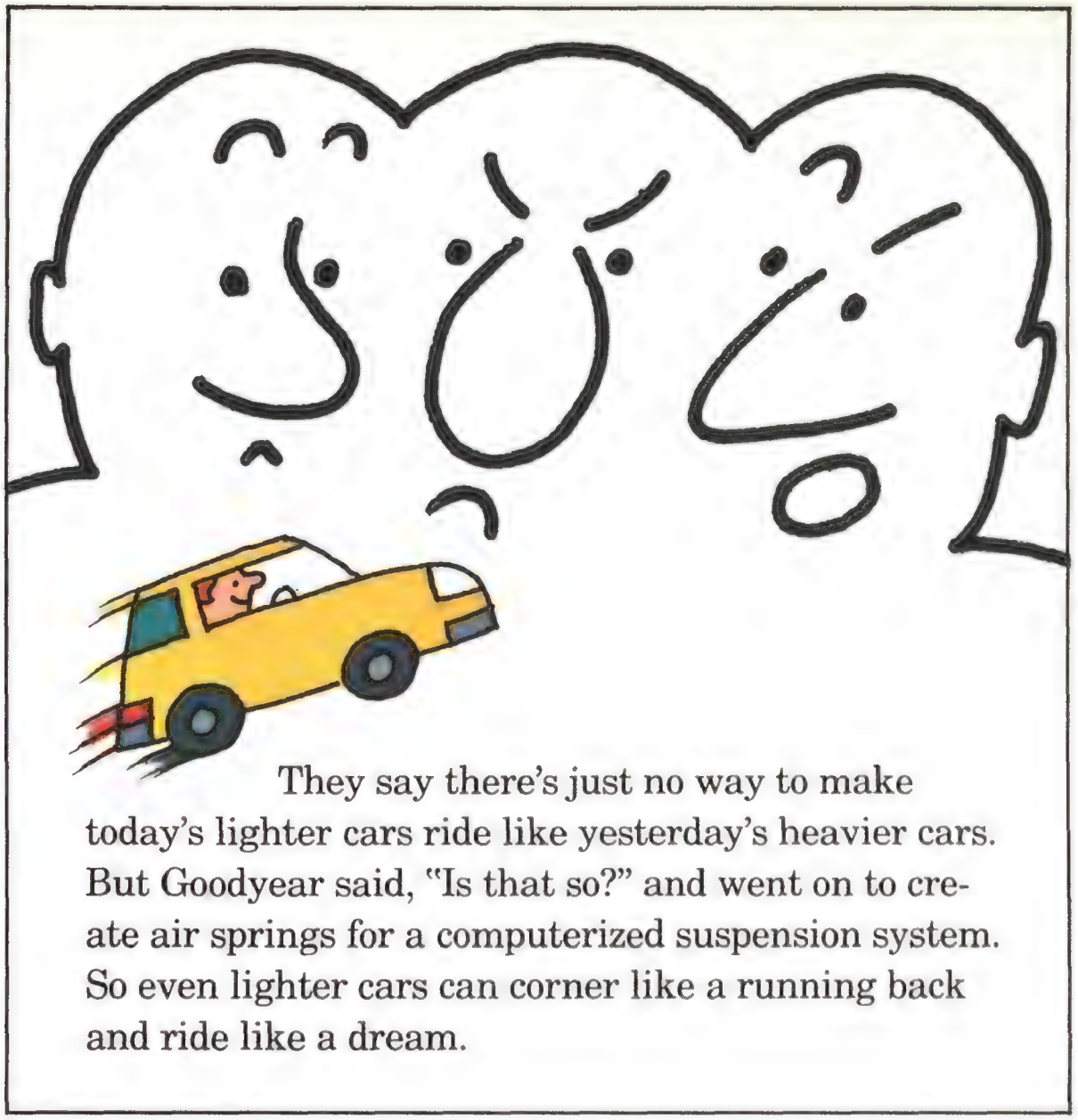
At 25, he was ready to make a greater break with his past. Such a giant step, however, takes preparation. It was not until April 1851, after a six-month voyage around the Horn, that he arrived in Monterey, only to discover that the company which had organized the expedition —ironically named La Fortune—had gone bankrupt. With some of his shipmates, he formed the Company of Ten and, innocents all, they set off on foot for the Southern Mines, the way unmapped beyond the San Joaquin River. He had a smattering of English (he spoke a little, an associate understood a little), a knowledge of compass reading and the matter-of-fact determination characteristic of him throughout his life in America. After a punishing trip (one man attempted suicide), they reached the first placers and the Company dissolved as casually as it had formed.

Perlot spent seven years in the Southern Mines, moving from placer to placer,

Perlot came to America seeking gold, found self-reliance, tolerance, liberality.

fighting too much or too little water, working alone or in temporary partnerships with one or more miners, usually French-speaking. Like most of them, he never found the strike that would make him rich, but he earned a living, sometimes a good one, and more important, he responded to the country in ways that belie his "one passion, that for gold."

He became an expert woodsman, came to know and admire the Indians, helped open a road into the Yosemite Valley. He suspected that his Indian friend Juan was right when he said that "gold costs more trouble than it's worth." Yet he stayed on the placers until too many miners and too little gold made a living precarious, and until the individual prospector began to give way to "enterprises raised on shares, that is, to the capitalists," and he saw the danger of his dwindling into an employee. He followed the call of gold to Oregon, but he got no further than Portland. A temporary job turned into a



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career and he became a successful market gardener and nurseryman, the first landscape gardener in Oregon.

In 1872, partly because Portland was ceasing to be a frontier city, "I said goodbye to this land where during twenty-two years I had lived a life so intense, so free and, in sum, so happy." He returned to Belgium, settled with his family in Arlon and spent his long retirement gardening, hunting, fishing and telling tales of his American adventures. Near the end of his life, he wrote down his stories for his family and friends. *Vie et aventures d'un enfant de l'Ardennes,* which was privately printed in 1897, has only now been translated into English as *Gold Seeker*—a remarkable document and a delight to read.

It is difficult to understand how the intrepid and increasingly American Perlot, the California adventurer and the Portland businessman, could spend the last 30 years of his life in a Belgian village. Perhaps it was his memories that kept him from turning into the narrow-minded villager that he so disliked. One of the fascinating things about *Gold Seeker* is Perlot's sense of American openness and possibility in contrast to the oppression of a rural Belgium bound in by a state religion. A freethinker who praised Indian society as a "theocracy without priests," he reflects both French anticlericalism and American tolerance, a practical necessity on the frontier where a man's life sometimes depended on the nearest stranger whatever his religion or country of origin.

America was not quite as pure as he suggests, as occasional remarks and stories indicate, and Herbeumont was a home as well as a trap, as his comments on isolation and homesickness show. The difference between his two lives can be seen in his reaction to his brother and another man from Herbeumont who joined him in Oregon: "I found them exactly as I had left them, having gained nothing, lost nothing, learned nothing and forgotten nothing; physically and morally, not the least change, I recognized them as if I had left them the day before."

Seven years in the mines was a liberal education for Perlot, and certainly one of the pleasures of the book is that he comes across as an enlightened, understanding and compassionate human being. His discussions of society, religion and war break the narrative but only to enrich

No. 4

The Hay-Adams Chronicles

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it, as do his explanations of mining.

Perlot's testimony to the nobility of his dog, occasioned by Miraud's behavior when both he and his master are starving, is one of the most charming passages in the book. In fact, Miraud is one of the strongest characters in *Gold Seeker*, and his death is almost as distressing to the reader as it is to Perlot. His presentation of his dog is characteristic of the work as a whole. There is immediacy, warmth and vividness throughout, and his prose, generally direct, sometimes turns mock-elegant, displaying a verbal playfulness that he occasionally uses even when he is recounting a painful incident. Howard R. Lamar, who edited the book, rightly insists on its importance as a document about French-speaking immigrants in the American West. For the general reader, however, *Gold Seeker* provides a narrative as amusing as it is informative. Perlot is real gold, dug belatedly from the California mines.

Gerald Weales
Professor of English, University of Pennsylvania; author of *Canned Goods as Caviar*

The Living Garden
George Ordish
Houghton Mifflin, $17.95

Out of the verdant Weald of Kent, sometimes called the Garden of England, comes this admirable cross between a garden manual and a historical study.

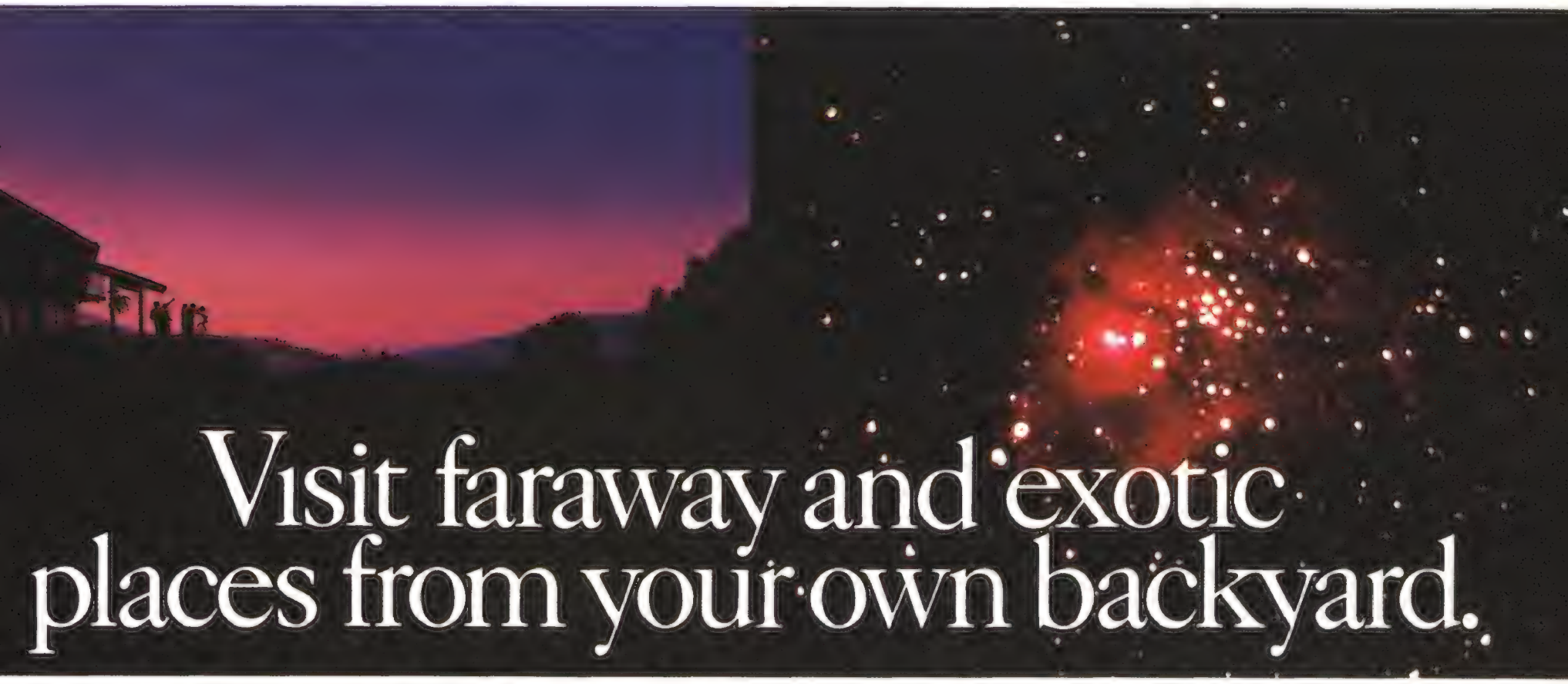
George Ordish's account of 428 years of a garden at a home called Bartons End suggests both the analytical sweep of Fernand Braudel's treatise on pre-industrial Europe as well as the minute observations of nature in Charles Darwin's tome on the *Origin of Species*. This is a book for gardeners who see the whole globe in a clod of dirt, a good read for people who look for total immersion in a self-contained world.

In a precise, laconic style—this is one garden book without flowery excess—Ordish narrates the story of a garden which began as a modest little bed of medicinal herbs outside the front door. The tentative project of a farmer's wife to add a little income and a touch of beauty becomes, little by little, an elaborate living space far more ornamental than utilitarian. Each successive owner makes a contribution, reflecting personal interests and horticultural fashions. In 1559, for instance, more land is wrested from the forest. In 1562, a cousin from The Hague brings Mary Barton two specimens of hop, a controversial new crop from Flanders. In 1758, a greenhouse is built. In 1780, large beds of nettles are left uncut to attract butterflies.

Ordish analyzes the reasons that went into each decision and he offers irresistible tidbits of botanical history. Like Braudel, Ordish packs his chapters with statistics. For instance, we learn that the largest particle of soil that an earthworm can pass through its mouth is eight-hundredths of an inch in diameter, and a formula to predict population growth of field mice is explained in great detail.

The most memorable passages deal with moles and voles, mites and ticks, hawk moths and wireworms. The essay on the life of earthworms in the Kentish soil is a gem, recalling Darwin's account of turtles in the Galápagos Islands.

Ordish does not attempt to refract world history through the history of a



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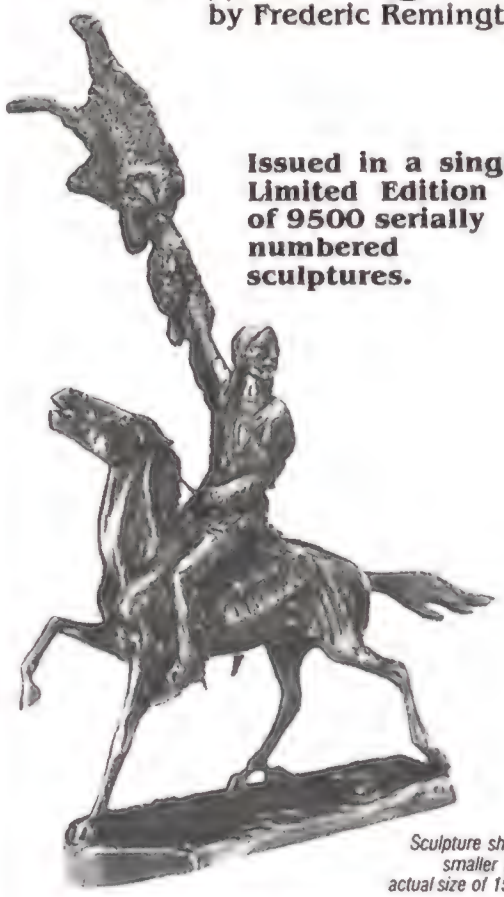

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garden. This is an unpretentious book. He merely mentions that the harsh winter of 1812-13 which killed a sweet bay hedge was the same that defeated Napoleon in Russia. The expansion of the British empire serves as the background to the appearance of new plants.

The author shies away from profiling the humans engaged in creating the garden. He lists the names and analyzes their horticultural inclinations. Somehow he resists the temptation of making more than a flat, two-sentence reference to a heart-warming conclusion linking four centuries of gardeners. In 1961, a descendant of the original owner, Desirée Barton of Duxbury, Massachusetts, called at Bartons End, saying that she was tracing her ancestors. The then owner, Phillip Frazer, offered to help, and in 1962 they were married.

Charles Fenyvesi
Gardening columnist, *Washington Post*

The Fiery Cuisines
Dave DeWitt and Nancy Gerlach
St. Martin's Press, $13.95

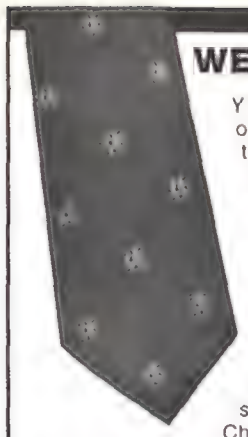
The Feast of Santa Fe
Huntley Dent
Simon and Schuster, $16.95

Peppers: The Domesticated Capsicums
Jean Andrews
University of Texas Press, $35

In culinary circles, 1985 may come to be known as the year of the chile pepper. Hardly a week goes by without the food pages of major newspapers carrying essays in praise of one or more varieties and offering recipes for using them. In many major-league ballparks the nacho, a Southwestern concoction of corn tortilla chips, melted cheese and sliced jalapeño chiles, is giving the traditional hot dog a run for the money. Mexican and Tex-Mex restaurants proliferate at an exponential rate, all offering chile-laden foods (see page 114 of this issue). Mexican food is available in London, Paris and Amsterdam as well as in Mexico.

And in the past year several major publishers have brought out serious books dealing with this lowly flora.

There is one major discrepancy in all this. Strictly speaking there is no such thing as a "chile pepper." As more than one authority points out, the chile (alternately spelled chili and chilie) is of



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the genus *Capsicum*, while pepper (the kind in your grinder) belongs to the genus *Piper* (SMITHSONIAN, February 1984), and the two are unrelated.

The confusion is due to an error credited to Christopher Columbus, almost on a par with his enduring misidentification of New World aboriginals as "Indians." Both mistakes came from his wishful illusion that he had reached the Indies. A direct and easy sea route to the Indies and their spices, pepper in particular, had been his primary objective. The spice trade had been dominated by Arab dealers who charged exorbitant prices. So valuable were peppercorns that they were sold singly. When Columbus found the natives of Caribbean islands eating quantities of the eye-watering fruits of native plants, he concluded that these were pepper pods and took them back to a pepper-hungry Europe.

The Fiery Cuisines, by Dave DeWitt and Nancy Gerlach, is basically a cookbook based on pungent ingredients, including pepper, ginger, horseradish, mustard and curry. But greatest emphasis is placed on the capsicums, not surprising since the authors live in Albuquerque, in the heart of U.S. chile country. Their recipes offer a world tour for those with leather gullets.

Another New Mexican contribution is Huntley Dent's *The Feast of Santa Fe*. Dent writes with a historian's long view and a gourmet's relish, going thoroughly

Jalapeño, named for Jalapa, Veracruz, may be "best known pepper of them all."

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London Outlook, featured in *The New York Times* (5 March 1985), is written by Londoners to provide fresh insights into the social scene, the changing 'face' of London and the myriad delights and diversions largely unknown to tourists.

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into the role capsicums have played in a region where Spanish, Mexican, Indian and Yankee practices have been blended into a sophisticated whole. There are, as well, many unusual recipes.

Biggest, most ambitious and most expensive volume of the lot is Jean Andrews' *Peppers: The Domesticated Capsicums*. The book has 32 large color plates of handsome paintings by the author illustrating the varieties of domesticated capsicums, some as familiar as the bell pepper, others rare and exotic. Andrews, like many another artist, was first drawn to the capsicums by their forms and colors. But from this beginning she went on to a scholarly pursuit of everything she could find out about them.

She traces the capsicums' origin to central Bolivia and says that by the time Europeans arrived they were being widely cultivated as far away as Mexico and the Caribbean islands.

Literature on the subject is reviewed, including ancient commentaries. Father José de Acosta (1539-1600) warned that their use "is prejudiciall to the health of young folkes, chiefly to the soule, for that it provokes to lust. . . ." Andrews takes no position on the lust question but points out that it has been used in place of soap in the mouths of profane youngsters.

Other nonculinary uses include deterrence to thumb-sucking, a treatment for the neck wool of sheep to discourage attacks by predators and as an ingredient in such things as athletic liniment and the mace used these days in riot control.

The author has done a brave job of trying to pin down identification of the different varieties, and it is almost predictable that she will be assailed by chile authorities, all strong-minded folk who seldom agree with one another. Nomenclature differs from region to region, and the plant itself complicates matters by self-hybridizing and producing variants under different growing conditions.

But despite these differences of opinion, no other member of the vegetable kingdom can claim enough of a following to support countless fan clubs (the various chapters of the Chili Appreciation Society International and the International Chili Society, for example). And what other fruit, herb or spice has inspired so many books and so many cooks?

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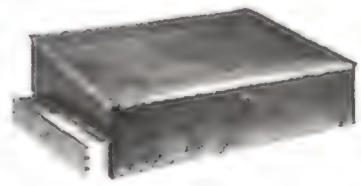

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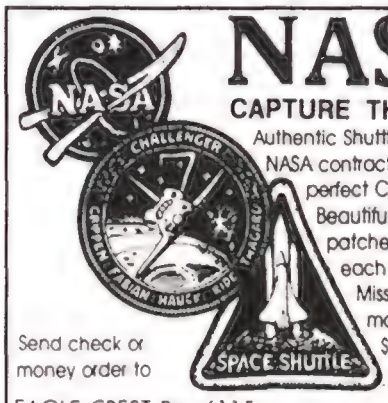

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Additional reading

Smithsonian horizons (p. 14)

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"She was America's Most Successful Woman Architect" by Patricia Failing, *Art News*, January 1981

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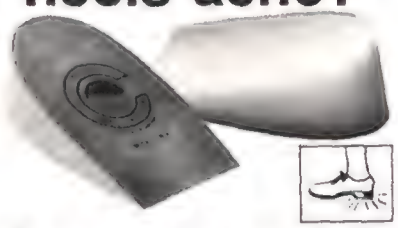

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"Julia Morgan of California: A Passion for Quality and Anonymity" by Mary E. Osman, *AIA Journal*, June 1976

Airstream trailers (p. 74)

Airstream by Robert Landau and James Phillippi, Peregrine Smith (Salt Lake City), 1984

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New dance (p. 86)

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San Antonio (p. 114)

The Politics of San Antonio: Community, Progress & Power, edited by David R. Johnson et al., University of Nebraska Press, 1983

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Smithsonian highlights

Each December, early in the month, the Resident Associate Program brings in "Gingerbread Lady" Patricia Hudson to teach the secrets of creating houses (p. 162), covered bridges and other wintertime treats. The festive edibles are fun to build—and to demolish!

Planning a Smithsonian visit?

Get a head start—send a postcard request or call for a free Associates' Planning Packet: Associates' Reception Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560; (202) 357-2700 or TDD for hearing impaired (202) 357-1729. At the Associates' Reception Desk in the castle 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. daily, you will receive printed materials, details on members' benefits and an orientation program.

Special December exhibits and events

National Museum of African Art
Go Well, My Child: Photographs by Constance Stuart Larrabee in Collaboration with Alan Paton (through January 5, 1986) See *Highlights continued.*

Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden
A New Romanticism: 16 Artists from Italy (through January 5, 1986).

National Museum of American History
The Trees of Christmas (December 20-January 6, 1986) Themes for this year's trees include "Action Santas," "Airing the Quilts" and "Japanese Origami."
Holiday Celebration (December 26-31; noon-4 P.M.) Christmas, Hanukkah and New Year's festivities.

National Air and Space Museum
Exploring Comets (opens December 6; continues indefinitely).
Flying the SR-71 Blackbird (December 12; 7:30 P.M.) Lecture by Col. William Skliar.

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Gingerbread house is among treats built by Resident Associate instructor.

National Museum of American Art
The Graphic Work of George Elbert Burr (December 3-April 13, 1986) Scenes of the American desert.

Cooper-Hewitt Museum (New York)
Advertising America (December 17-March 9, 1986) More than 150 print and TV ads.
The Golden Eye (through February 23, 1986) Western designers go to India.

Lecture and Seminar Program

Associates in Sarasota will have the opportunity to meet Smithsonian curators and scientists when the Lecture and Seminar Program sponsors a five-day series of events with the University of South Florida, Selby Botanical Garden, Sarasota Art Association and the Ringling Museum of Art. The program, January 30-February 3, includes lectures on marine biology, aviation history and American art, and a seminar on nature photography. If you live in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area, or if you plan to spend the winter in this region and wish to receive an invitational brochure, write: Lecture and Seminar Program, A&I 1190, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560.

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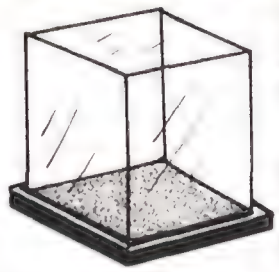

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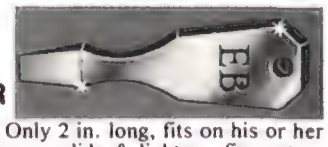

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The Smithsonian Institution's Conservation Analytical Laboratory announces a new training program in furniture conservation beginning in September 1986. The program, intended for experienced and skilled woodworkers who wish to pursue a career in preservation, stabilization and restoration of historic furniture, consists of 12 sequential courses, followed by a one-year internship. The courses, which are one or two weeks long each, are offered at three-month intervals.

For further information and application material, please contact Marc Williams, Furniture Conservation Program, CAL, MSC, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560; (202) 287-3729. Application deadline is March 17, 1986.

Resident Associate events

To become a Resident Associate, or to find out about the many other activities presented monthly, or for fee and ticket information, call 357-3030. Here are some December events:

20th Century Consort (December 7; 5:30 P.M.) Preceded by informal lecture.

Nutcracker Magic (December 8 and 14) Performers from the Washington Ballet show children how they prepare for show.

Race and the American Legal Process: Where Have We Been and Where Are We Going? (December 12; 8 P.M.) Lecture by A. Leon Higginbotham jr.

The Shepherd's Cantata—A Traditional Italian Christmas Play (December 22; 8 P.M.) I Giullari di Piazza performs.

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service

SITES circulates exhibitions to hundreds of cities outside Washington. To sponsor a show in your community, write: SITES, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C. 20560. Some December exhibits:

Dayton, Ohio (December 21-February 2, 1986) *Sculpture: Exploring Three Dimensions*, Dayton Art Institute.

New Orleans (December 5-February 2, 1986) *Audubon: Science Into Art*, Louisiana State Museum.

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Images worth a thousand words

After reading Cry, The Beloved Country, *Constance Stuart Larrabee decided to photograph Paton's world*

Cry, The Beloved Country, Alan Paton's 1948 novel set in South Africa, deals with love of family and homeland—and the pain of separation. The protagonist, a Zulu country parson named Stephen Kumalo, searches in Johannesburg for his son, who has been lost to tradition and destroyed by the modern world.

Soon after the book was published, South African photographer Constance Stuart went to see Paton. She was very interested in the people he had written about, she told him; and she wanted to visit their world. So, together, the two traveled to Ixopo in the countryside, where the novel begins and ends, as well as to other places in the book's pages.

That was 36 years ago. This year, several staff members from the National Museum of African Art met with Constance Stuart Larrabee, who now lives in the United States. Very quickly, says museum director Sylvia Williams, they became excited by Larrabee's work. "The contact sheets were numerous, and without consciously realizing it, we were organizing an exhibition." The resulting portfolio of black-and-white prints will be on view through January 5, 1986.
Constance Bond

In Natal province, a minister and his wife walk in Stephen Kumalo's footsteps.

In Basutoland (now Lesotho), ponies rest before climbing to Macuta villages.

In Eastern Transvaal, Larrabee's camera captured strength of Ndebele mother.

At Ixopo Station, residents await train just as Paton described in novel.

The colourful charm (Harry's in the canary yellow) of this European neighborhood is actually in Wellington!

Harry about to set off on Careys Bay - a scene right out of a New England postcard!

...y traipsing off among the ferns in Tahiti? ...again - it's Bay of Islands, New Zealand!

A cousin took this of Harry, rowing me down the River Avon. Ours, not Englands!

That's him in the photos! That's our Harry Bright, New Zealand's Advertising Manager down under, taking the tour of New Zealand rather splendidly.

And apparently not taking the advertising of New Zealand very seriously.

It's starting to look like Harry's wife Eloise is the only Bright doing any sending these days. But, look here, we do appreciate her posting these Kodaks to us.

After all, they're rather graphic proof of at least two things:

Harry's diminished enthusiasm for getting down to business on our long-overdue ad.

And, if we do say so ourself, New Zealand's undiminished beauty.

Do keep those snaps coming, Eloise!

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Christmas in Wales December 22-January 3: Based in the ancient cathedral town of St. David's, enjoy walks along the rugged coast while experiencing and participating in the colorful holiday traditions of this Celtic culture.

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Blue Whales of Mexico March 9-16: Cruise the Sea of Cortés aboard the *Don José* to explore desert islands and coastlines in search of the mighty blue whales.

Shadows of the Past—Chateaus, Caves and Villages of the Dordogne: April 5-19 or April 19-May 3: Explore prehistoric caves, medieval castles and storybook towns; enjoy gastronomic delights in this fascinating region of France. Includes four days in Paris.

Portugal April 9-23: Traverse the land of the explorers, beginning with Lisbon's diverse charms before sampling the rich variety of the coastline and hinterland.

Istanbul & Beyond May 1-17: Six days in this glorious Turkish city followed by travel to one of three areas: Central Anatolia and Cappadocia; the Aegean and Marmara coast or the Mediterranean and Aegean.

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The lecture program will provide insights into the cultural and political forces that gave rise to hundreds of splendid country houses. You will learn the significance of the country home to British culture and discover the upstairs/downstairs customs and rituals that governed daily life.

Associates will learn about the challenges of restoring and preserving country homes and the objects they contain; explore the colorful history of heraldry; enjoy the genteel rituals of tea drinking, and gain a firsthand view of two of Britain's most famed country homes as their present owners describe contemporary life in Scone Palace and Firle Place.

To enhance your course of study, you are invited to attend a gala welcoming dinner, where you will meet fellow Associates and your distinguished British faculty; hear 18th-century music originally commissioned by country-home owners and performed by the Smithson String Quartet, and enjoy a "high tea" in the sumptuous surroundings of the Grand Salon of the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery.

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By Richard Wolkomir

Gulp! Sob! Groan! Not puns again!

Chico Marx, brother of Groucho and Harpo, once took umbrage upon hearing someone exultantly exclaim, "Eureka!" Glaring, Chico shot back: "You doan smella so good youself!"

For such punsters, merely turning a phrase is insufficient—they must *over*turn it. Groans and snarls from offended listeners will not deter them.

The latest apologist for this verbal thuggery is a British scholar, Walter Redfern. In his new book *Puns*, he argues that rather than being "the lowest and most grovelling kind of wit," as John Dryden insisted, puns are useful, especially for anyone who believes in "the importance of not being earnest." Of course Redfern may not be a reliable witness. After all, he discovered punning when his teacher caned him for a schoolboy misdemeanor—gleefully telling the class that now the boy should be called "Walter Redstern."

My own weakness for what Oliver Wendell Holmes termed "verbicide" began at a dinner party with a co-worker and his old friend our host, who began the evening by announcing "Birds," causing the other guests to turn up their eyes and groan. It was their custom, he explained, to choose a topic at the evening's start, then turn as many puns as possible on it. Apparently I looked dubious, because my friend told me sternly: "It's a game that crows on you."

Over the soup, our host dismissed a Broadway revival as a terrible "wrendition." My friend replied, "On the contrary, the performances are starling." "You've been gulled!" our host shot back. To which my friend countered: "Don't be aukward!"

My own lame contribution came later as we were about to leave: "Maybe I'm raven, but it's been a pheasant evening, even if I couldn't tern a pun." Snapped the host: "Don't be bittern."

Ever since that night, I've been an addict, like Walter Redfern. But his approach to this otherwise frivolous subject is erudite. He notes, for instance, that Polynesians are great punsters. In certain regions of Indonesia, wordplay is a ceremonial rite. Chinese, too, is a treasure trove of puns; it is rich in homonyms—the word *i* (pronounced ē) has 140 different meanings and four different sounds.

Jonathan Swift (no mean punner himself) spuriously derived "pun" from the French word for "bedbug," *punaise*, "a little stinking Insect, that gets into the Skin, provokes continual Itching." Redfern says the word's actual etymology is murky. It may derive from the Italian *punto* (a fine point). Most people, however, don't care where the pun comes from, if only it would go back.

Puns, Redfern acknowledges, "make people groan, squirm, flinch, grimace, or wince." Unlike many pun lovers, however, he recognizes that most puns are perfectly awful.

Certainly he would not approve of Bennett Cerf's proposed tire-store ad, "We Skid You Not!" and his desert definition of Camelot: "A place where they park camels." Nor would he excuse novelist Peter De Vries, a shameless and devious punster who once dubbed a nightclub for aging swingers "The Slipped Discothèque."

Yet many fine minds are addicted to puns. Shakespeare, as computed by punaholic F.A. Bather, no doubt a member of the International Save the Pun Foundation, was guilty of 1,062 plays on words, many as bad as the dying Mercutio's description of himself as "a grave man." Thus it is fitting that Hamlet's "O! that this too too solid flesh should melt" is sometimes imprinted on weighing scales. Oscar Wilde's "work is the ruin of the drinking classes" still flourishes in the age of the three-martini lunch. Harry Truman invited cronies home to Independence for Bess' cooking by noting "Missouri loves company." And Walter Winchell always praised the Broadway season's first show—"Who am I," he asked, "to stone the first cast?"

Oliver Wendell Holmes insisted "There is no such thing as a female punster," so punning may be a crime for malefactors only. The real question, however, is not punsters' prevailing gender, but why do they do it?

Walter Redfern argues that "puns keep us on the alert." And they are linguistic bargains, he says—two meanings for the price of one word. He cites the man who arrived so late at a flower shop none of the anemones he usually bought for his wife's birthday were left, so that he had to buy ferns. But when he apologized, his forgiving wife exclaimed, "With fronds like these, who needs anemones?"

Puns you didn't make, because you weren't fast enough with the repartee, can haunt you. As a palliative, Peter De Vries invented "Prepartee"—you think up your puns in advance, holding them cocked and ready until the conversation finally comes around to the right opening. You wait, for instance, possibly for decades, until somebody innocently asks, "Why was Jack Dempsey known as the King of the Heavyweights." And then you say, quick as a fist, "because he had such a divine right."

For two decades I've brooded over what I *should* have said at that dinner party built around bird puns. And, just recently, it came to me—I should have praised a sensational new Mexican thriller. You know, the one about the bibulous ornithocide, called *Tequila Mockingbird.*

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